PHILIPS' HISTORICAL READER

NO. 3

MIDDLE ENGLAND

1154 TO 1603

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Philips' Historical Readers.

MIDDLE ENGLAND

FROM

THE ACCESSION OF HENRY II. TO THE DEATH OF ELIZABETH.

HISTORICAL READER No. III.

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PREFACE.

IN 'Middle England' the aim has been to narrate accurately a part of the Biography of the people of England. Special attention has been given to the delineation of the varieties of character presented by the leading men of the successive generations; and it is hoped that the gallery of historical portraits sketched in the text will be found not unworthy of the beautiful series of vignettes with which the artist has adorned the pages.

The earlier lessons are designed to lay carefully the foundations of the later history; here, the qualities sought after have been accuracy and fulness. In the middle chapters advantage has been taken of the unequalled series of historical plays bequeathed to the nation by its greatest Dramatist; and any increase of vitality and vigour there displayed is due solely to the poet who could, without boasting, say—

> "Graves, at my command,
> Have waked their sleepers; oped, and let them forth,
> By my so potent art."

As the aspects of national life became more manifold, it was more and more necessary to concentrate attention upon the

greater movements of the periods; and thus, naturally, the '*selection of the significant*' came to be the first duty of the narrator.

It has never been forgotten that the volume was to be used as a *Reading*-book. Accordingly, the lessons have been prepared with special attention to the elocutionary capabilities of the successive subjects; and as it was felt to be unwise to load the text with details, the notes have been rendered a storehouse of carefully-selected information. In the first place, the writer has sought to present the facts of our country's history in *logical sequence*, so as to appeal to the reasoning faculties of the pupils, and thus promote *intelligent* reading. In the second place, he has striven to paint in vivid colours the intensely human aspects of the national life, and thus to call into activity that emotional sympathy which is the essential requisite of expressive elocution.

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THE PLANTAGENETS.

HENRY II.—THE MAN AND THE ERA.[1]

THE Aim of our Study.—When Henry of Anjou ascended the throne of England, the Normans and the Saxons still remained distinct; and it was during his reign that the mingling of the two races began—a process which never ceased until they became welded into one compact people, the English nation.[2] Our aim shall be to study, not merely the lives of kings and queens, nor the chronicles of war and victory, but to learn the real history of our English forefathers.

How the Saxons had fared before Henry came.—Henry became king after a time of terrible com-

motion. The common people had suffered dreadful oppression. An old Chronicle[3] gives us a full account of the horrible tortures inflicted upon the unhappy Saxons. Here is one sentence from it: "They hanged up men by their feet and smoked them with a foul smoke; some were hanged up by their thumbs, others by the head, and burning things were hung on to their feet." Another old writer[4] says, "Wounded and drained of blood by civil misery, England lay plague-stricken."

Such tyranny could only make the Saxons loathe the Normans more than ever; union between tyrant and slave seemed impossible. We shall see, however, that all helped to work out the final grand result—a *single* race, speaking *one* language, subject to the *same* law.

The Normans desire a Change.—Neither Stephen nor Matilda had been able to rule firmly. To retain their followers, both had allowed them to do whatever they pleased. Many a noble not only acted as "was right in his own eyes," but (having no fear of the law) eagerly did what he knew to be wrong. One tyrant fought with another; not a single Norman had any rest—it was just like an outbreak of riot in a crew of pirates—each one struggled with his neighbour, and all were worn out.

This was not all. Each of the rivals for the throne, Stephen in particular, had brought over bands of mercenaries[5] from the Continent. These new-comers, too, joined in the battle for booty; and the Normans looked askance at the '*intruders*,' who strove with them for a share in the plunder of the miserable Saxons. For the first time, the Normans in England looked upon people from the Continent as '*aliens*;'[6] the disdainful 'con-

querors' of England had at last been forced to regard themselves as *Englishmen.*

Thus—partly from sheer exhaustion and partly from jealousy of the '*foreigner*'[7]—the Normans, as well as the suffering Saxons, longed for a change.

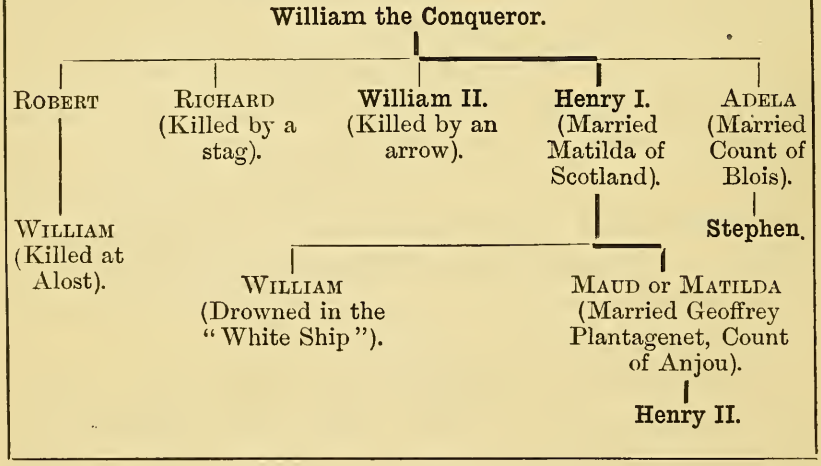
Norman Sympathy with the Saxons.—The wisest and best of the barons felt genuine pity for the oppressed; they were disgusted at the cruel lawlessness which prevailed, and their sympathy turned from their fellow-Normans to those whom they had never before thought of as their fellow-countrymen.

To these we must add the leaders of the *Church.* The Archbishop of Canterbury, Theobald, was a wise and good man; he loved England, his 'country;' and it was to put an end to the misery that he had supported Henry II. in his demand for the throne. *Ecclesiastical*[8] *Councils* had deposed both Stephen and Matilda; they had not only admitted but repeatedly urged "*the right of a nation to good government.*"

Henry's Descent: Influence on our History.—Henry II. was not himself a Norman. His mother, Matilda, was the daughter of a *Scottish* princess of *Saxon* blood.[9] His father, like himself, was Count of Anjou. The first count had been a rough hunter on the borders of Brittany,[10] where the people were of the same race as the Welsh; he had won his coronet by helping the French king against the *Norsemen,*[11] and his successors had always remained the enemies and rivals of the Dukes of Normandy. It was to win the alliance of the Count of Anjou, the only enemy whom he feared, that Henry I. had given his daughter Matilda in marriage to the count's son. Henry II. was then an *Angevin,*[12] *not a Norman;* as he was by descent, so was he in character and feeling.

In two ways this helped the Saxons. Henry came to England having no special liking for the Normans, but determined to rule with a firm hand; and, as it was the Norman and the Flemish [13] mercenaries who were the lawbreakers, all his influence tended to lower the petty tyrants and to restore to their true place the oppressed Saxons. On the other hand, the Normans

DESCENT OF HENRY II.


William the Conqueror.
Robert
Richard (Killed by a stag).
William II. (Killed by an arrow).
Henry I. (Married Matilda of Scotland).
Adela (Married Count of Blois).
William (Killed at Alost).
Stephen.
William (Drowned in the "White Ship").
Maud or Matilda (Married Geoffrey Plantagenet, Count of Anjou).
Henry II.

were led more and more to look upon Henry's measures as 'foreign' interference, to regard England as *their home*, and instinctively to turn for help to their fellow-islanders. Thus the two races and languages began to mingle, and the Saxon or truly English element gradually became predominant.

Henry's Character and Aims.—When Henry became King of England, he was already the most powerful prince in France. A glance at the accompanying map will show how great were his continental possessions; some of these he had inherited from his father, others

HENRY II's DOMINIONS

Scale of English Miles
0 100 200

he had got with his wicked wife—Eleanor of Poitou. The young king[14] was a man of great activity, strong and stirring, the hardiest and the most untiring worker of his day. "He never sits down," says a contemporary,[15] "he is always on his legs from morning to night."

Now Henry determined to throw all his energy into the work of extending alike his English and his French dominions, and of uniting both into one compact and magnificent empire. We shall see how much this unwearied worker and mighty prince was actually able to do, but how completely he was baffled by 'the spirit of his age.'

In looking back upon past history we are able to distinguish strong currents flowing in fixed directions during particular periods. When a leader directs his people with the undercurrent, he becomes a reformer and genius; when a man—no matter how strong—tries to struggle against the mighty tide, he and his work are swept away and perish. At Henry's accession, seven hundred years ago, there had begun in Europe a steady movement among the small feudal principalities and dukedoms to form themselves into *Nations;*[16] and when Henry thought he could take the half or the whole of France and weld it into *one* with the half or the whole of Britain, he was struggling against an irresistible force, and was completely foiled.

1. **Era,** the period. This lesson shows how Henry II. was peculiarly fitted to govern England at this particular period.
2. The Danish element had, before the Norman Conquest, merged into and become one with the English people.
3. **The Saxon Chronicle,** a chronological record of events in English history, beginning with an abstract of Bede's Ecclesiastical history, and continued by successive writers to the year 1154. The language of the portion after the Conquest is called Semi-Saxon.
4. William of *Newbury,* a monk and historian who lived in the reigns of Henry II., Richard I. and John.
5. **Mercenaries,** those serving for the sake of *payment.* The word 'soldier' has the same literal meaning.
6. **Aliens,** those belonging to *another* country.
7. **Foreigner** literally means one dwelling *out of doors,* or abroad. The word 'forest' comes from the same root.
8. **Ecclesiastical,** belonging to the *Church,* from the Greek and Latin *Ecclesia,* a meeting-place or church. The same root is found

in many names of places, *cf.* Eccles, Eccleſechan, &c.

9. Margaret, the queen of Malcolm of Scotland, and sister of Edgar Atheling the grandson of Edward the Confessor.
10. **Brittany**, the ancient Armorica, the north-western province of France.
11. **Norsemen**, from whom the *Normans* were descended.
12. **Angevin** (pronounced *Angsh-vang*) an inhabitant or native of Anjou.
13. **Flemish**, belonging to Flanders. The greater part of the old province is now included in Belgium.
14. Henry was twenty-two years of age at his accession.
15. **Contemporary**, one who lived at the *same time with* him.
16. The same movement towards national unity is still going on. In our own day the smaller divisions of Italy and Germany have been thus united.

THE FIRST SEVEN YEARS OF HENRY'S REIGN.

1154–1161.

HENRY'S First Measures.—Let us now see how Henry sought to carry out his purpose. Well was he called *Curtmantle!*[1] No long robes would he allow to impede his movements, which remind one of the swift sweep of the kingly eagle. At once he set his face 'like a flint' to put down lawlessness and to establish good government. Without any animosity against either Norman or Saxon, partial neither to layman[2] nor to ecclesiastic, nothing whatever would he permit to turn him from his purpose.

The lawless Flemish mercenaries of Stephen he disbanded and dismissed. The charters[3] of London and other cities, almost the only safeguard of the Saxon toilers, he renewed. He demanded back all royal lands which had been granted during the two previous reigns, and recovered the royal castles which various barons had seized during the same period. How the wolves snarled as the gallant huntsman drove them from their prey! On he pressed; 'eleven hundred new castles,' which had been built during the civil war and were mere dens of public robbers, he razed to the ground.

Better still, he re-established *Courts of Law*, and appointed judges to travel through the land for the administration of justice and the redress of wrongs.

Henry's Early Efforts to Extend his Dominions.—To complete the establishment of his authority in England, the determined king marched northward against Malcolm of Scotland, who not only claimed to be Earl of Huntingdon, but held the three northern counties of England. These latter Henry compelled him to give up, and forced him to do homage for his earldom.

This work was hardly completed when troubles in France summoned the tireless monarch to his native home. His brother Godfrey claimed Anjou, declaring that his father had intended him to have it if Henry got England. With one swift blow Godfrey was baffled, and Henry once more hurried to the north.

The Scotch king was again forced to do homage. The feudal nobles, hitherto defiant, at the same time submitted and surrendered their castles. Henry, with resolute energy and splendid success, in two years made himself master of the whole of England. Order had succeeded disorder.

Unsuccessful Attack on Wales.—Still determined to extend his dominion, Henry next led an army into Wales. The task of its conquest was too much even for him. The wild Welsh mountains sheltered the hardy hill-men, who surprised a large division of the invading force and almost completely destroyed it; the rest of the English army they forced to retreat. In several subsequent attempts, while he saved himself from defeat and drove the Welsh from the more open country, Henry found it impossible to reduce them to submission.

Further Extension of Henry's Power.—By arranging a marriage between Margaret of France and his eldest son, Henry secured a hold upon Brittany in the north-west of France. Ever restless, ever anxious to extend his French as well as his English dominions, he next led an army against Toulouse [4] in the south-east. Here he was foiled by the determined opposition of the French king.

In this expedition, Henry confirmed the habit of receiving money payments [5] from the barons in exchange for military service. You will easily see how important a step this was. Under the Feudal System previous to this reign, the only soldiers at the service of the country were the *barons* and their followers. As a consequence, the real power had been entirely in their hands—the *king* had been their leader, not their ruler; the *law* had been subordinate to them, not they to the law; the *commons* had been their plundered and despised serfs, not their free fellow-subjects.

Now, with the money payments which he received, Henry was able to *hire* soldiers to fight for him. This weakened the power of the Norman barons. He was also in a position to do away with the Danegeld,[6] a tax hated by the commons and felt by them to be a heavy burden. Thus, the weight was being gradually lifted from the shoulders of the Saxons. Slowly but surely, the two races were coming to an equal level.

We have seen how energetically and with what apparent success Henry strove, during these seven years, to carry out his policy. No king in feudal times ever did more, and yet, as we have said, ultimate failure was inevitable. We shall next find him, bent on subjecting every one in the state to a strong law administered by him-

self, engaged in a struggle with what was at that time a mighty power—the Church.

1. **Curtmantle**, short cloak.
2. **Layman**, one of the *people* as distinct from the clergy.
3. **Charters**, documents or deeds granting certain rights, especially that of self-government.
4. **Toulouse**, at this time a territory in the south of France stretching eastward from the Garonne.
5. Called *Scutage* or shield-money.
6. **Danegeld**, *i.e.*, Dane-gold or Dane-money; originally levied by Ethelred the Unready to buy off the Danes. The name had become to denote a tax levied for the defence of the country against sudden danger from a foreign foe.

THE CROWN AND THE CHURCH.
1161–1170.

THOMAS À BECKET.

IN the struggle between Henry and the clergy, the leading opponent of the king was Thomas à Becket. This famous man was son of the Port-reeve[1] or Mayor of London. His father lost his wealth; and Becket entered the service of Theobald, Archbishop of Canterbury. He soon became known to the king, rose step by step in favour, and was at last made Chancellor—one of the highest positions in the realm. He was also appointed to many other offices and enjoyed vast revenues.

He lived at this time in much splendour, and acted like a great noble rather than as one of the clergy. When Theobald died, the king insisted that Thomas should take his place as Archbishop. Becket was very unwilling; but at last he reluctantly consented. Immediately he changed his whole manner of life. He gave

up all his luxury and pomp, dismissed his gay train,[2] lived in simplicity, and assumed the solemn duties of leader of the Church.

Now, at this period, the clergy claimed that they could be tried only in their own courts; but Henry had resolved that *all* his subjects should submit to the law of the realm, and from that purpose nothing could turn him. Becket, too, was a bold and brave man—one who, in a cause he believed to be a right one, would never yield except with his life. Men recalled how he had once plunged into a swift stream to save his hawk, and brought it safely out while even bold warriors shrank back in fear.

There soon arose a contest between the king and the Archbishop. The chief points of interest in the struggle are brought out in the following dialogue.

Time, 1164, *just before the Council of Clarendon*[3] *and Becket's flight to France.*

Henry. Archbishop! listen now to my firm will;
In which, for all the love and favour kind
That knit your heart to mine in days gone by,
I wot[4] that you will not oppose your king.

Becket. I never can forget, my Lord, what you
Have been and done to me. Our hearts and minds
Were one; you made me rich and gave me power;
Ask of me aught that I *may* give, even life,
And it is freely yours.

Henry. I ask not life!
Your clergy[5] claim a freedom from the law.[6]
From all sides tidings come of horrid crimes
Done by vile clerks;[7] justice unsheaths her sword

And claims her due—in steps the Church and says,
"Nay! Nay! the man is mine; I'll see to it."
This must no longer be; 'tis quite opposed
To all the ancient customs of this realm.
A power within a power cannot exist.
Soon, here at Clarendon, our States [8] will meet;
And I shall there present the Articles [9]
Of just and equal law, all old in use.
From you I ask, demand, assent and aid.

Becket. My Liege! You know that I wished not this post
To which you forced me up. I said you'd hate me soon
As much as then you loved. The sacred rights
Of our most holy Church I cannot yield!
It would be sacrilege.[10] Even my king
I cannot aid against my order's rights.

Henry. Thomas! beware! You know not what you do.
I love the Church with filial love; through it
The blessed gift of our salvation comes.
Demand of mine is not against her rights.
You were an upright law-respecting man;
How can you guard the miscreant, ruffian crew,
Who under this new power claimed by your courts
Are sheltered from th' avenging outraged sword
Of justice stern? 'Tis shame upon our realm.
Nowhere will law be rev'renced and obeyed,
While in our midst your clerks can laugh with scorn
At its most holy rules.

Becket. My Lord, 'tis true
That evil men have ranked themselves with us.
'Tis but th' abuse of a most precious right—
What gift that God has given is not abused!

You, noble Sire, use well the kingly power,
You rule with justice and desire but right.
But, Sire, kings there have been before your reign
Who used their office 'gainst all that was good;
Then, in our courts the pious and the learned
Their refuge found from ruthless tyrant's sway.
When you're at rest in Heaven's blesséd sleep,
What guardian will remain against misrule?

Henry. The law! which I shall leave so just and strong,
That neither prince nor priest will dare it break.
There's more to say! You prelates of the Church
Claim new, unheard of, strange immunities:[11]
Before, you gladly ranked with our great lords;
But *now* you separate yourselves from them,
And, 'Privilege' your cry, refuse to bear
The burdens of the state. This too, must cease.
The great Archbishops who preceded you
Submission meet have made to weaker kings.
Do you the same by me; the Church will have
No better son, nor you a truer friend.

Becket. My Lord, it cannot be.

Henry. Then list, O priest.
I raised you up, and I will cast you down;
I made you rich, and I will leave you poor.
I'll forfeit all the goods of all your kin,
And drive them with you and your helpers all
From forth the realm.

Becket. Proud king, I serve a power
Greater than thine. *You* o'er the body hold
A mighty rule, *it* o'er the soul doth reign;
You raised *me* up, but it called *you* from France
And made you sovereign[12] here. Your threat I cast
You back; and say 'Beware, lest that same Church

That made you mighty king undo its work,
And leave you ruined now, hopeless hereafter.'

Henry. No more, ungrateful man! Meet me forthwith
At Clarendon; and there before your peers
Repeat this threat if thou hast hardihood.
If you submission make, I'll all forgive;
If not, then dread the worst for you and yours.

Murder of Becket.—The end of this struggle was very sad. After six years of exiled life in France, the Archbishop returned in 1170 to England, and excommunicated the chief of his adversaries. When this was told to Henry he was very angry, and cried out, "Are there none of the cowards eating my bread who will free me from this turbulent priest?"

Four of his knights hurried to Canterbury, forced their way into the victim's presence, and demanded that he should yield to the king. His attendants forced à Becket into the Cathedral, and he took his stand before the altar. There, in the sad, dim, solemn dusk, the fearless Archbishop was cruelly murdered.

The people regarded Becket as a martyred saint, and made many pilgrimages to his shrine; all Christendom was shocked at the crime, and Henry had to yield many of the points he had gained.

1. **Port-reeve**, *i.e.*, governor of the port. *Cf.* Shire-reeve or Sheriff.
2. **Train**, followers or dependants.
3. **Clarendon**, in Wilts, two miles south-east of Salisbury.
4. **Wot**, originally the past tense of the A. S. *witan*, to know; came to be used as a present, and thus meant *to know*.
5. **Clergy**, Latin *Clericus*, Greek *Kleros*, literally means those chosen by lot for the service of the Church. *Cf.* Acts i. 26.
6. This privilege was called 'Benefit of Clergy.'
7. **Clerks**, *i.e.*, clergymen. As in those days the *clergy* alone were able to read and write, and were always employed to write letters and other documents, the word 'clerk' came to be used for one that writes for another.
8. **States**, that is, the Great Council or Parliament. The King, Lords, and Commons are still called the 'Three *Estates* of the Realm.'
9. **Articles.** These were known as the 'Constitutions of Clarendon.'
10. **Sacrilege**, the act of *stealing sacred* things, violating or profaning sacred things.
11. **Immunities**, *i.e.*, freedom from *services*.
12. **Sovereign** is more correctly spelt as by Milton, *sovran*. The word is derived from the Latin, *supremus*, highest; and the last syllable, *reign*, is in no sense connected with the word *reign* (Lat. *regnum*).

MURDER OF BECKET.

HENRY'S LAST TRIUMPH AND FALL.
1170–1189.

THE Conquest of Ireland.—As we have had clearly placed before us the aims of Henry, the nature of the work he had set himself to do, and his place in the history of the country, we may proceed more rapidly over the rest of his reign. His eager ambition to extend his dominions had led him, many years before the actual invasion, to obtain a papal bull[1] for the conquest of Ireland. The Pope, you must know, was believed to have supreme control over all outlying islands; and so his consent was considered necessary before the expedition could be attempted. An opportunity now presented itself.

Ireland was subject to four kings, under whom were numerous princes and chiefs. From time to time the supreme control was in the hands of one sovereign ruler, the "Ardriagh" or Powerful King. When the government of this monarch was not exceptionally strong, the country was rent by civil wars. One of these now occurred.

Dermot, the licentious King of Leinster, had carried off the wife of one of the minor princes; the Ardriagh, O'Connor, King of Connaught, had driven him from his throne. He came to Henry and obtained permission to gather an army in England. There were at that time many barons who had impoverished themselves in the civil war between Stephen and Matilda; these men, with their followers, were ready to take part in any enterprise which offered them a chance of regaining wealth and power. Dermot had no difficulty in finding

many in Wales and the west of England to espouse his cause. Of these, the chief was Richard of Clare,[2] surnamed Strongbow.

Very easily, the small but well-equipped force scattered the ill-trained and badly-armed hordes of the natives. Wexford, Waterford, and Dublin fell into the hands of the invaders. Strongbow married Dermot's daughter, and succeeded him as King of Leinster. Then came Henry to reap the fruits of this conquest. He left the greater part of the country under native custom and subject to King O'Connor, established his followers and English law in the region round the east and south coasts, and took the title of "Lord of Ireland."

IRELAND IN THE REIGN OF HENRY II.

These petty victories, scarcely worthy of the name, are called the "Conquest of Ireland." We cannot but regret that things happened as they did. Had the Irish nation been able to defend their liberties, they would undoubtedly in due time have joined the empire of their own free will—a united, patriotic, and self-respecting people. Had Henry succeeded in completely conquering the island, things might have gone on there as they did with the Saxons in England. In either case, much

misery, dissension, and lawlessness would never have appeared in Ireland's after-history.

The First Great Insurrection against Henry.—A danger now threatened Henry's power, which for a time he was able to repel, but which finally overwhelmed him. The barons had bitterly resented his attacks upon their power. They were no longer supreme judges in their districts, and paid soldiers had taken their place in the field. They now had an opportunity of showing their hatred.

The king's eldest son, who had previously been crowned, demanded immediate possession of England. He was refused, and fled to the court of the King of France. Many of the barons took up his cause. How bitter this must have been to the proud heart of the great king! All his struggle had been to win a magnificent empire for this very son; and now his hope, his heir, had joined his mightiest enemy.

Nor was this all. Henry was like a stag at bay. From all sides, his foes attacked him. The French king seized the chance of weakening his great rival; the Flemish mercenaries, whom Henry had expelled from England, invaded the east coast; and a Scottish army crossed the Border.[3] Any other king would certainly have been crushed. Henry, however, was able to triumph over all his opponents.

To appease the Church and please the people, he did penance at Becket's tomb and offered his naked back to the scourge. Then with wonderful rapidity, he vanquished his foes by a series of brilliant victories. The King of Scotland,[4] in particular, was captured and made to pay homage for his realm. It was upon the pretext of this humiliation of the Scottish monarch, that a

later English king[5] sought to subject Scotland to his rule.

Henry's Great Legal Measures.—We cannot speak of Henry's sad death, without once more looking back upon his noble deeds. He always had professed a love for order and law. Now, in the zenith[6] of his power, he showed how real was this love. It is this that makes one pity his fate, and regret that he had fixed his mind upon a hopeless scheme—an *ignis fatuus*[7] which lured him to destruction.

This great king put in thorough order the system by which royal judges should visit all parts of the country from year to year. When it was shown that these judges accepted bribes, he formed a High Court of Appeal against their decisions.

Trial by Jury, too, owes its origin to Henry. Freemen were no longer to be left at the mercy of any lord, but were to be judged by the oaths of 'twelve lawful men of their own hundred.'[8] Before this reign, even murder could be atoned for by a money payment; this Henry abolished, and ordained that all serious crimes should meet a heavy punishment. Well kept he his promise:—

> "The Law! which I shall leave so just and strong,
> That neither prince nor priest will dare it break."

Finally, all able-bodied men were bound to defend their country. None were excused. Knights in their mail, yeomen and burghers with their sword and lance, all free-born men must fight for England. Glorious act! No longer call the Saxons slaves: they, too, were summoned to draw the sword for their country side by side with those who had been their conquerors.

Henry's Fall.—Henry has been compared to an

'eagle slain by his young.' Four several times his sons joined with his enemies. The patriarch of old cried out, "If I be bereaved of my children, I am bereaved." What must have been the feelings of this noble king when the very boys for whom he had founded an empire turned against him! His first and third sons were both dead. His second, strong in frame and brave in deed, now helped his sworn foe.

Henry's great ambition had been, as you know, to join his English and French dominions into one great empire. All his hopes were now bitterly disappointed. Not only were many of his French provinces taken from him, but he was deprived even of Anjou—the home of his race. He saw with weeping eyes his native town [9] in flames. Lifting his hands to heaven, he cried out: "Thou hast taken from me that which I loved best—the place where I was born and where my father lies."

Still there was one son left. His youngest! Surely, he would be true. Alas! John also had turned traitor.[10] "Then burst his mighty heart." Turning his face to the wall, he said "Let all things go—I care not for the world nor for myself."

We are told that his son Richard wept over the dead body of his sire. Well might he weep. The ambitious hopes of all his dynasty lay dead with that great king.

1. **Bull**, a papal edict, so called from the *seal* (Lat. *bulla*) affixed to it.
2. **Richard of Clare.** The family name of Clare was taken from one of their estates in the south of Suffolk. Strongbow's father received the title of Earl of Pembroke, after a successful inroad into South Wales.
3. **The Border.** The district where England and Scotland '*march*' together, *i.e.*, the country on each side of the boundary line.
4. William the Lion.
5. Edward I.
6. **Zenith**, the highest point. The word properly means the point of the heavens right over head.
7. **Ignis fatuus**, a *babbling* or *foolish fire*, a shifting light seen on summer nights a few feet from the ground over morasses. Travellers often mistake it for light in a house and, seeking to approach it, are lost. Also called 'Jack-a-lantern,' 'Will-o'-the-wisp.'
8. **Hundred**, a subdivision of a county in England; may originally have contained a *hundred* families.
9. Tours, on the Loire.
10. At the head of the list of those nobles who had joined Richard in rebellion against him, Henry found the name of his loved son John.

RICHARD I.—A FEUDAL KNIGHT UPON THE THRONE.

1189.

RICHARD I.

CHARACTER and Aims of Richard.—Richard, justly called Cœur-de-Lion or Lion-heart, was the very model of the steel-clad knight of old. In him, the untiring activity of Henry appeared as surpassing muscular strength and dauntless physical courage; his father's cool bravery was warmed by the fire of his mother's[1] southern clime.

He still clung to Henry's dream of an Anglo-French empire, and saw clearly that this could never be realised without the humiliation of his rival—the King of France. Unlike his father, he failed to perceive that the only road to victory lay through the firm administration of a just and impartial law. This was well shown in his choice of ministers. While his undoubted remorse and filial grief led him to choose the advisers of his father, his lack of insight caused him to reject the great law-giver of the past reign—Ranulf de Glanvill.

Neither Henry nor Richard realised that their true kingdom was *England*. Richard spoke his mother's language and sang the soft songs of Provence;[2] his ideal of the poet was the troubadour[3] of Languedoc;[4] to surpass the French king in knightly prowess and to lead

a united army of all the provinces of France to victory and fame, formed his highest ambition. He ceased to be an *English* king—*England* was merely his treasury; *Englishmen* were but soldiers, to be cared for only as they helped him to his wished-for empire.

Still his form was so Herculean,[5] his courage so conspicuous, his acts so generous, that for the first time since the Conquest the Saxons looked upon their king with admiration. His recklessness they could sympathise with; his misfortunes they could pity; his victories they felt to be their own.

The Lion-Heart in Battle.[6]—"What dost thou see, Rebecca?" again demanded the wounded knight.

"Nothing but the cloud of arrows flying so thick as to dazzle mine eyes, and to hide the bowmen who shoot them."

"That cannot endure," said Ivanhoe; "if they press not right on to carry the castle by pure force of arms, the archery may avail but little against stone walls and bulwarks. Look for the knight of the Fetterlock,[7] fair Rebecca, and see how he bears himself; for as the leader is, so will his followers be."

"I see him not," said Rebecca.

"Foul craven!" exclaimed Ivanhoe; "does he blench from the helm when the wind blows highest?"

"He blenches not! he blenches not!" said Rebecca; "I see him now. He leads a body of men close under the outer barrier. They pull down the piles and palisades; they hew down the barriers with axes. His high black plume floats abroad over the throng, like a raven over the field of the slain. They have made a breach in the barriers—they rush in—they are thrust back! Front-de-Bœuf[8] heads the defenders. Front-de-

Bœuf and the Black Knight fight hand to hand in the breach amid the roar of their followers, who watch the progress of the strife.—Heaven strike with the cause of the oppressed and of the captive!"

She then uttered a loud shriek, and exclaimed, "He is down! he is down!"

"Who is down?" cried Ivanhoe; "tell me which has fallen!"

"The Black Knight," answered Rebecca faintly; then instantly again shouted, with joyful eagerness, "But no! but no;—he is on foot again, and fights as if there were twenty men's strength in his single arm. His sword is broken—he snatches an axe from a yeoman—he presses Front-de-Bœuf with blow on blow. The giant staggers and totters like an oak under the steel of the woodman—he falls!—he falls!"

"Front-de-Bœuf?" exclaimed Ivanhoe.

"Front-de-Bœuf!" answered the Jewess. "His men rush to the rescue and drag Front-de-Bœuf within the walls."

"Ah!" exclaimed the knight; "do the false yeomen give way?"

"No!" exclaimed Rebecca, "they bear themselves right yeomanly—the Black Knight approaches the postern [9] with his huge axe—the thundering blows which he deals, you may hear them above all the din and shouts of the battle—stones and beams are hailed down upon the bold champion—he regards them no more than if they were thistle-down or feathers!"

"Ha!" said Ivanhoe, raising himself joyfully on his couch, "methought there was but one man in England that might do such a deed! Seest thou nought, Rebecca, by which the Black Knight may be distinguished?"

"Nothing," said the Jewess; "all about him is black as the wing of the night raven. Nothing can I spy that can mark him further; but having once seen him put forth his strength in battle, methinks I could know him again among a thousand warriors. He rushes to the fray as if he were summoned to a banquet. There is more than mere strength,—there seems as if the whole soul and spirit of the champion were given to every blow which he deals upon his enemies. God forgive him the sin of bloodshed!—it is fearful, yet magnificent, to behold how the arm and heart of one man can triumph over hundreds."

The Knight-King Prepares for War.—The opportunity of surpassing his rival, for which Richard had been longing, soon came. Since the time of William Rufus, all Europe had been stirred up by a grand religious movement. Jerusalem, the City of the Great King, was in the hands of infidels—followers of Mahomet, despisers of our Lord. Pilgrims, seeking to worship at the Holy Sepulchre, had been plundered by mocking unbelievers.

All Europe was summoned to fight for the Faith; and, in myriads, the religious and the warlike answered the call. Every soldier wore upon his breast the sign of the cross, all were *Crusaders;* the war was a Holy War.

Richard, confident in his matchless prowess, seized upon such an enterprise as the one certain way of exalting himself above Philip of France. "Give us," said he, "but lance in hand and an equal field, and they shall soon see who is fittest to lead a Christian host." All his resources were devoted to this end. Scotland's allegiance, royal estates, crown jewels, everything that

he could sell, were readily given up in order to equip a force for this romantic war.

1. Eleanor of Poitou.
2. **Provence,** the southern part of France between the Rhone and the Pyrenees. The Romans called this part of Gaul their *province*, hence the name.
3. **Troubadour,** the poet-singer of the south; corresponding to the *trouvère* or romancer of the north.
4. **Languedoc,** the name applied to Provence (see above) from the language spoken there, called *Langue d'Oc*; the corresponding northern dialect was known as the *Langue d'Oil*. Both names were derived from their words for *yes*—the former (*oc*) from the Latin *hoc*, this; the latter (*oil*) from the Latin *illud*, that.
5. **Herculean,** like Hercules, the Greek hero-god of strength.
6. Abridged from the Siege of the Norman Castle of Torquilstone, in Scott's 'Ivanhoe.' The speakers are Ivanhoe, a wounded Saxon knight, and Rebecca, a Jewess—both prisoners in the castle. They were rescued by Robin Hood and his archers, aided by the Black Knight who was none other than King Richard in disguise.
7. **Fetterlock,** *i.e.*, the padlock for securing the fetters; the device on the Black Knight's shield indicated the captivity from which he had recently escaped.
8. **Front-de-Bœuf,** brow of the ox, or bull-head.
9. **Postern,** a small side or back gate.

THE THIRD CRUSADE.
1189–1194.

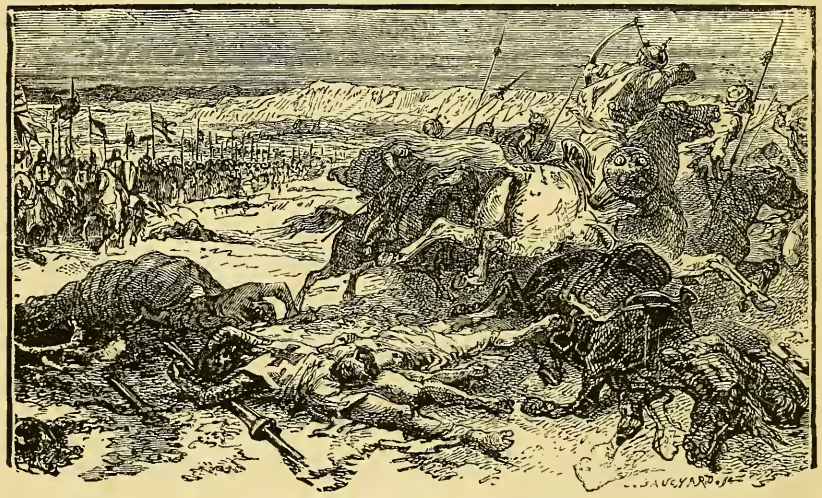
THE Soldiers of the Crescent.[1]—Palestine was at this time under the rule of a noble and enlightened Saracen prince, *Saladin the Great*. This illustrious warrior had established a magnificent empire extending from Tripoli[2] to the Tigris; Egypt, Palestine, Syria, Mesopotamia,[3] all owned his sway; a million scimitars[4] flashed at his command.

These Saracens were Arabs and followers of Mahomet; but although unbelievers, they were not uncivilised. In architecture, astronomy, medicine, mathematics, and domestic comfort, they far surpassed the warlike Crusaders. You will not wonder then that one great effect upon Europe of these wars was a great advance in art and science, together with an increase of wealth and commerce.

These 'soldiers of the Crescent' fought without the heavy armour of the Christian knights. Their horses

were light and swift; the turban took the place of the helmet; their weapons were the keen scimitar, the sharp javelin, and the swift arrow. Quickness and dexterity, rather than strength and weight, were their best qualities as soldiers—qualities especially valuable on a sandy soil and under a blazing eastern sun.

It was, then, into a war with such opponents that Richard plunged. His determination to surpass Philip was his impelling motive, his religious enthusiasm was



CRUSADERS AND SARACENS.

his warrant, his chivalrous delight in strife and victory threw a halo of enjoyment round the whole enterprise.

The Journey to Palestine.—Richard and Philip met on the plain of Vezelay in Burgundy.[5] Their army numbered 100,000 men. Knights in splendid armour, yeomen with sword and lance, cross-bowmen and archers, formed a force which nothing but dissension and jealousy could defeat.

Richard's heart must have swelled with martial pride. No army under the sun could cope with the Christian

host; and no knight in all that force could match the peerless Paladin[6] of England.

Marseilles,[7] *Messina*,[8] *Cyprus*[9] mark different stages on the route to Palestine. The French army went by Genoa.[10] It has been noted that while they sailed from that port in hired ships, the English made their voyage in vessels of their own.

The whole force spent the winter at the Sicilian port, for the mariners of that age shrank from the dangers of a voyage in the stormy season. This delay was most unfortunate. Had the enthusiasm which animated the crusading armies been at once directed against the Saracen foe, the mutual jealousy of the two kings might have had no opportunity of showing itself, and victory would have been certain. As it was, the rancorous spirit of the leaders so infected the whole of their followers that the two parties nearly engaged in fierce combat.

The contrast between the monarchs was now well seen. Richard, fierce and warlike, impatient of control, ever ready to appeal to arms, was called '*the Lion*;' Philip, smooth and conciliating, stooping to listen to all who could be of service to him, trusting rather to policy and plot than to prowess, was dubbed '*the Lamb*.'

For various reasons Richard refused to wed Philip's sister, Alice, to whom his father had betrothed him, and married Berengaria of Navarre.[11] This offence was never forgiven. The two great leaders of the Crusade left Sicily not merely as rivals but as bitter enemies.

In the Holy Land.—At length more than a year after the march to Marseilles, the English army landed at *Acre* on the north-west coast of Palestine. This port had been strongly fortified by the Saracens, and was

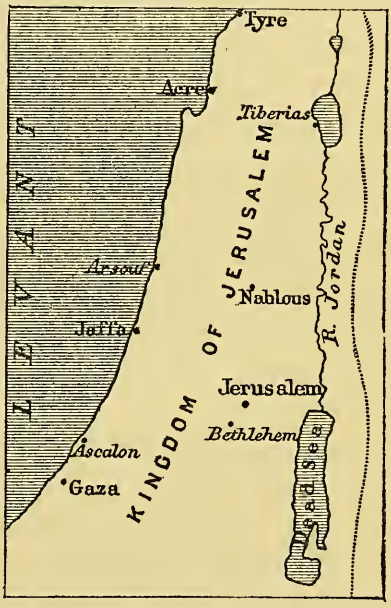
defended by a garrison under the command of Saladin's teacher in the art of war. For two years the Crusaders

RICHARD AT ACRE.

had striven in vain to take this fortress. In fact, the *besiegers* had become the *besieged;* for the Christian

army had been surrounded by a force led by the Saracen king himself, and no way of escape was left to them except by sea.

It was at this crisis that Richard and Philip arrived. At once the tide of victory turned; and, had it not been for mutual jealousy and hatred, Jerusalem would have been won. The rival nations strove to surpass one another in deeds of valour. Richard, in particular, aroused the enthusiasm of the whole crusading force, and excited the wondering dread of the unbelieving foe. Then he right nobly won his name not only of 'Lion' but of 'Lion-heart;' and to him and him alone, all but his personal foes ascribed the glory when Acre fell.



PALESTINE.

His passionate pride once more undid the work done by his mighty arm. The Duke of Austria had planted his standard upon one of the towers of Acre, but Richard tore it down and mortally insulted his adversary by striking him a blow. At the same time Philip of France withdrew from the Crusade, and left behind him but a small part of his force. There followed a period of suffering and cruelty: of cruelty, for the prisoners were slain on both sides; and of suffering, for famine cut off hundreds of the poorer people, and compelled even noble knights to hire themselves as servants.

From Acre Richard led his army along the coast

towards the strong fortress of *Ascalon*. On his way thither he was met at *Arsouf*, near *Joppa*, by a great army of 300,000 men. Then was fought one of the greatest battles of that age. The two wings of the crusading army were broken and defeated; the centre, led by Richard himself, alone retrieved the fortunes of the day. He won a complete victory, and 40,000 Saracens are said to have fallen. *Joppa* was immediately taken, and *Ascalon* soon fell.

But the spirit of the Christian army was broken. Germans, Italians, and French were obstinately determined to proceed no further. Richard advanced towards Jerusalem, but was forced to halt within sight of its walls. He was summoned back to relieve Joppa, which had been attacked by Saladin. Here he won his last victory, and the fruitless crusade ended in a three years' truce, and thus Richard's great scheme fell to the ground.

The spot is still shown where Richard looked upon 'the Holy City,' 'the joy of the whole earth.' The rosy dawn broke over the distant hills, 'the mountains round about Jerusalem' shone with celestial beauty in the fresh morning light. Before him lay the spots rendered sacred by—

> "Those blessed feet,
> Which eighteen hundred years ago, were nailed
> For our advantage on the bitter cross."

The Holy Sepulchre was almost within his grasp. Covering his eyes with his hand, he wept bitter tears of regret and disappointment. "He who is not able to win you, is not worthy to look upon you," he exclaimed in bitterness of heart.

Once more he showed how this 'kingdom of Jerusalem' had filled his heart. As the ship was bearing him away from its sunlit strand, he placed himself in the stern where he could catch the last glimpse of the receding shore. With outstretched hand and uplifted eye, he cried out, "Holy Land! dear Holy Land! I leave thee now, but I shall soon return and set thee free or die amid thy fields."

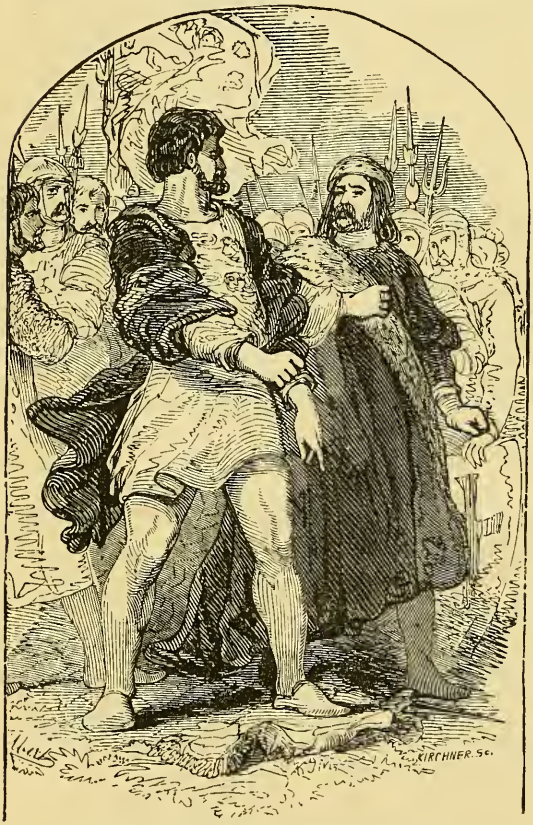
Was it for this he had drained his island-realm of treasure and of men? Was it for this so many fearless swords had flashed and so many brave hearts bled? Perhaps in that moment of exceeding sorrow he thought upon the sad face of his dead father, to whom he had given the cruellest wound, who had seen the cherished purpose of *his* life brought to nought, and who also had been forced to weep over the loss of the town as dear to him as life.

1. **Crescent.** The Mahommedan symbol was the *Crescent* or growing moon, just as that of the Christians was the *Cross*.
2. **Tripoli,** in North Africa, between Tunis and Egypt.
3. **Mesopotamia,** literally the country *between the rivers* Tigris and Euphrates.
4. **Scimitars,** sharp curved swords.
5. **Burgundy,** a province in the south-east of France.
6. **Paladin,** a champion or hero: derived from *palatinus*, the name applied to the officers in the palace of the Byzantine emperor. It was afterwards applied to the chieftains in Charlemagne's army, and so came to mean a distinguished warrior.
7. **Marseilles,** the chief port of France on the Mediterranean.
8. **Messina,** a port in the north-east of Sicily, on the straits of the same name.
9. **Cyprus,** an island in the Levant, now occupied by England.
10. **Genoa,** a famous port on the north-west coast of Italy.
11. **Navarre,** a province on the Spanish side of the Pyrenees, then an independent kingdom.

THE CRUSADER'S RETURN.

CAPTIVITY of Richard.—On his way homewards, Richard twice suffered shipwreck; and, being afraid to venture into France, he determined to travel in disguise across Austria and Germany.[1] Near Vienna, he was captured and imprisoned by the Duke of Austria, whom

he had insulted at Acre. He was now loaded with irons and confined in a loathsome dungeon. All Europe rung with indignation at such an outrage on the hero of Christendom.[2] Still his captors held him fast. He was sold to the Emperor of Germany, and was by him treated with equal barbarity.



RICHARD AND LEOPOLD AT ACRE.

He now tasted the bitterness of 'benefits forgot.' His brother John eagerly joined with Philip of France and his other enemies, strove to perpetuate his imprisonment, declared that he was dead, and sought to have himself crowned as King of England. In spite of all, he was at last set free, but only on the payment of an enormous ransom,[3] which his English subjects gladly impoverished themselves to produce.

Closing Events of the Reign.—The effect of this crusade had been to advance still further the union of all the divisions of France into one nation. The Normans would no longer accept the Angevin prince as their own Duke, and Richard had to rule them as a

foreign conqueror; their strongholds he garrisoned with mercenaries, among whom the old Norman names were missing. Philip, aided by John, had invaded Normandy; Richard was set free just in time to hold him in check upon the frontier, and soon compelled him to agree to a truce.

The southern province of Aquitaine[4] had also risen in revolt; the nobles there were disgusted with the insolence of the hired soldiery. Richard was able, however, to reduce the rebels to submission; for in actual warfare, none could withstand the Lion-heart.

He now built a strong castle on an islet in the Seine, above Rouen the capital of Normandy. It was meant to serve the double purpose of keeping back Philip from without and of keeping down the Normans within. It was called 'Saucy Castle,' and was the strongest fortress reared in the Middle Ages. Its building occupied but one year; and as Richard looked upon its impregnable walls, he exultingly cried, 'How pretty a babe is mine, this child of but one year old.' "I will take it," said Philip, "though its walls be of brass." "I should hold it," jeeringly answered his rival, "though its walls were of butter."

The close of Richard's reign was sadly typical of a life of almost continual broil and battle. He was sorely in need of money. He heard that a treasure—twelve golden statues—had been found by one of his vassals.

To the Castle of Chaluz[5] he led his army and demanded the treasure. When this was refused, he declared that he would put the whole garrison to the sword. As he was riding round, scanning the walls and forming his plan of attack, a solitary arrow sped from the ramparts and pierced his shoulder. An unskilful surgeon caused the wound to fester, and it finally proved fatal.

The castle was taken and all put to the sword. The archer[6] who had wounded the king was reserved for special punishment.

When brought before Richard, the dying prince said to him: "What have I done to you that you should take my life?"

"You have slain my father and my two brothers," was the bold reply. "I am ready to bear any torture for having rid the world of so troublesome a tyrant."

Richard ordered him to be rewarded and set free, an instance of that knightly generosity which compensated for his occasional acts of passion. But no sooner had the great Crusader expired, than his soldiers put the archer to a cruel death.

Effects of the Reign upon our History.—During the last months of his reign, Richard had placed the supreme power in the hands of Walter, Archbishop of Canterbury, who had been trained by the great lawyer Glanvill. This statesman carried still further the legal plans of Henry II. The king's courts were made still more supreme over the local courts, and they exercised their power very strictly. Thus all classes were gradually led to think of the crown as their common oppressor. The nobles more and more looked upon the Saxons as fellow-Englishmen; the Saxons no longer regarded the barons as their brutal tyrants, from whom the king was their sole protector. So that although France and Palestine occupied so much of Richard's attention, yet his neglect of this country but helped forward the grand union of all sections of the people into one great nation.

1. Richard wished to reach the territory of his relative the Duke of Saxony.
2. **Christendom**, the *Christian* countries of Europe.
3. The ransom amounted to 150,000 silver marks.
4. **Aquitaine**, that part of France between the Loire and the Pyrences.
5. **Chaluz**, near Limoges, in Limousin, one of the central provinces of France.
6. Named Bertrand de Jourdon.

RICHARD ORDERING BERTRAND DE JOURDON TO BE SET FREE.

ACCESSION OF JOHN AND LOSS OF NORMANDY.

1199–1205.

JOHN.

CHARACTER of John.—John is declared by all chroniclers to have been the vilest of men. No services rendered to him could win his gratitude; no promises were observed by him; no virtue was respected by him. Father and brother alike he had betrayed; and now we shall find him ready to steal the inheritance of his young nephew, and to deprive him of eyesight and of life.

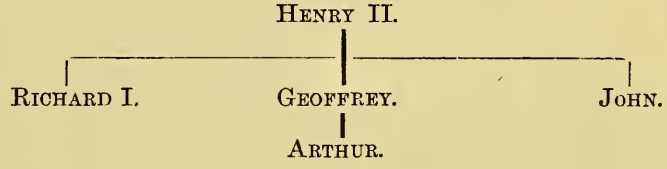
Yet this despicable king was gifted with great ability. Some of his measures prove him to have been as shrewd a statesman as his father, and at other times he showed himself a more skilful general than his brother. Yet he had none of the regard for just law which dignified the former, nor the heroic courage and personal prowess which won admiration for the latter.

Finally, his conduct disgusted all who came in contact with him. Thus, in spite of his splendid talents, he lost all for which his race had striven; was humiliated as no English sovereign had ever been; and died 'unwept, unhonoured, and unsung.' Yet from this vile prince his subjects were able to wrest a priceless acknowledgment of their rights; and thus from the worst of her monarchs

England derived blessings as great as she received even from the best and wisest of her kings.

John and Arthur.—The son of Henry II. who was next in age to Richard was Geoffrey. Accordingly, his son Arthur was the rightful heir; but John, in defiance of feudal law, seized the crown of England and the duke-

TABLE SHOWING ARTHUR'S CLAIM TO THE THRONE.



dom of Normandy. The queen-mother, Eleanor, secured for him the southern part of his French dominions, and to Arthur was left only the central portion.

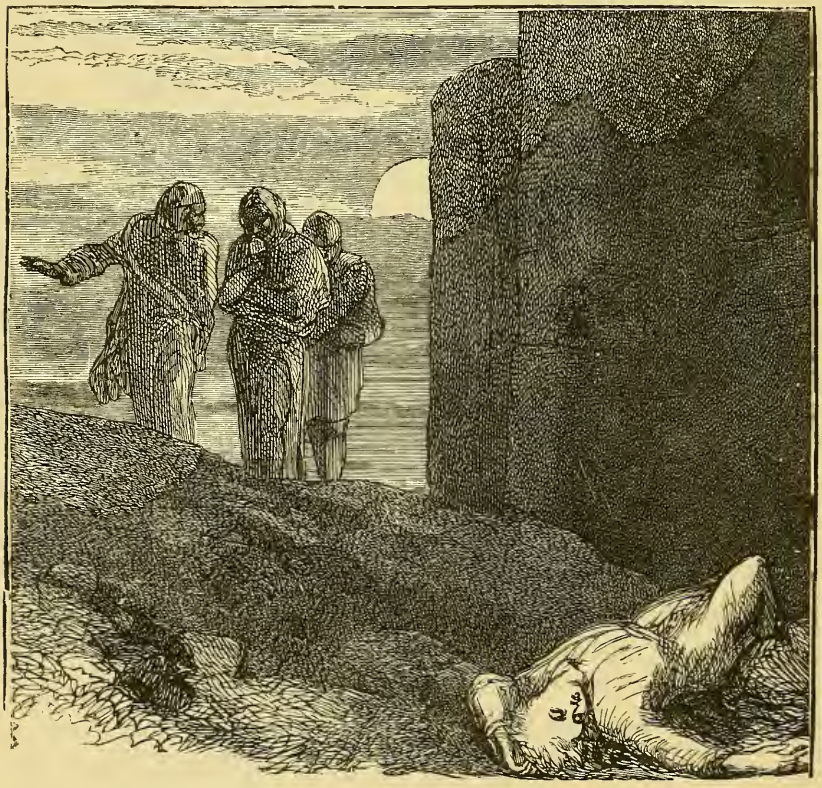
Philip of France, carrying out his old policy, seized the opportunity of destroying the power of his rival. He declared for Arthur, and war commenced.

John, with remarkable ability, formed a combination amongst all Philip's enemies. This made the French king pause; and then John won him over by proposing a marriage between Philip's son Louis and his own niece Blanche.[1] Poor Arthur's claims thus, for a time, fell to the ground; and John seemed to have a firm hold of every part of his empire.

The wicked shamelessness of the English king soon revived the war. He put away his wife,[2] and carried off the betrothed bride of a French count.[3] This countess he made his queen. At once, the southern part of France rebelled; the English barons demanded their

rights, and refused to leave their country to fight in France; Philip renewed the war, and Arthur again put forward his rightful claim.

John managed to capture his nephew, and cast him into prison.[4] He was never seen by his friends again.



THE DEATH OF ARTHUR.

The story is that John ordered his eyes to be put out; but that the man sent to do the cruel deed relented and could not commit so hideous a crime. It was whispered that one gloomy night John himself, taking the youth in a boat to the middle of the Seine, stabbed

him to the heart, and threw his body into the dark waves of the rolling river.

Our great poet Shakespeare[5] gives a somewhat different account of his death. He tells that after Arthur's eyesight had been spared, he endeavoured to escape from captivity, but was accidentally killed in the attempt. The story is best given in the dramatist's own words:—

Arthur. The wall is high; and yet will I leap down.
Good ground, be pitiful and hurt me not!
There's few, or none, do know me; if they did,
This ship-boy's semblance hath disguised me quite.
I am afraid; and yet I'll venture it.
If I get down, and do not break my limbs,
I'll find a thousand shifts to get away:
As good to die and go, as die and stay. [*Leaps down.*
Oh me! my uncle's spirit is in these stones—
Heaven take my soul, and England keep my bones! [*Dies.*

Arthur's death excited so intense a horror in the minds of all that, in two years, all John's French possessions were stripped from him, and England was completely severed from France.

This is a most important fact in the history of both countries—a step in the progress of each towards national unity.

1. Blanche of Castile, daughter of John's sister Eleanor, who had married Alphonso IX. of Spain.
2. Hadwisa of Gloucester, a Saxon lady.
3. Isabella of Angouleme, the betrothed of the Count of Marche, whom she married after the death of John.
4. Arthur was captured at Mirabeau in Poitou; and imprisoned at Falaise in Normandy, whence he was removed to Rouen.
5. King John, Act IV. Scene III.

KING JOHN TEMPTING HUBERT[1] TO KILL ARTHUR.

King John. Come hither, Hubert. Oh my gentle Hubert,
We owe thee much; within this wall of flesh
There is a soul counts thee her creditor,
And with advantage[2] means to pay thy love.
Give me thy hand. I had a thing to say,—
But I will fit it with some better time.
By heaven, Hubert, I am almost asham'd
To say what good respect I have of thee.

Hubert. I am much bounden[3] to your majesty.

K. John. Good friend, thou hast no cause to say so yet;
But thou shalt have; and creep time ne'er so slow,
Yet it shall come, for me to do thee good.
I had a thing to say;—but let it go:
The sun is in the heaven, and the proud day
Attended with the pleasures of the world,
Is all too wanton,[4] and too full of gawds[5]
To give me audience. If the midnight bell
Did, with his iron tongue and brazen mouth,
Sound one into the drowsy ear of night;
If this same were a churchyard where we stand,
And thou possessèd with a thousand wrongs;
Or if that thou could'st see me without eyes,
Hear me without thine ears, and make reply
Without a tongue, using conceit[6] alone,
Without eyes, ears, and harmful sound of words;
Then, in despite of broad-eyed watchful day,
I would into thy bosom pour my thoughts.

But ah, I will not: Yet I love thee well;
And, by my troth, I think, thou lov'st me well.
Hubert. So well, that what you bid me undertake,
Though that my death were adjunct to[7] my act,
By heaven, I'd do it.
K. John. Do not I know thou would'st?
Good Hubert, Hubert, Hubert, throw thine eye
On yond'-young boy: I'll tell thee what, my friend,
He is a very serpent in my way;
And, wheresoe'er this foot of mine doth tread,
He lies before me. Dost thou understand me?
Thou art his keeper.
Hubert. And I will keep him so,
That he shall not offend your majesty.
K. John. Death.
Hubert. My Lord?
K. John. A grave.
Hubert. He shall not live.
K. John. Enough.
I could be merry now. Hubert, I love thee;
Well, I'll not say what I intend for thee;
Remember!

Abridged from Shakespeare's "King John," Act III. Scene III.

1. Hubert de Burgh, who (according to the account followed by Shakespeare) spared young Arthur's life; and who, by his patriotic efforts in the following reign, won the admiration and love of his countrymen. See pages 56, 57.
2. **Advantage**, advancement, benefit.
3. **Bounden**, obliged.
4. **Wanton**, heedless, playful.
5. **Gawds**, ornaments or playthings.
6. **Conceit**, thought.
7. **Adjunct to**, joined to, the consequence of.

JOHN HUMILIATED.

STEPHEN LANGTON.

DISPUTE with the Pope.—We need not give all the particulars about this contest here. It is of interest, however, as showing how, in the Middle Ages,[1] the Pope maintained his sway over the crowned heads of Europe. The subject of dispute was the election of an Archbishop of Canterbury. The Pope appointed Stephen Langton, who was then at Rome, whose high character was well known, and whom we shall soon find acting as a true patriot; in doing this, he claimed supremacy alike over the clergy of England and over the king. John openly defied the pontiff.

The Pope's first step towards subduing the king was to publish an *Interdict*.[2] All religious worship ceased,[3] churches were closed, the dead were buried in unconsecrated ground, no priest was allowed to join people in marriage. The nation groaned, but John remained indifferent. What cared he for the religious feelings of his people?

The Pope, finding that John continued obdurate, then *excommunicated*[4] him. By this, his subjects were absolved from their allegiance, and all faithful believers were forbidden to hold any intercourse with him—he was accursed, but he still held out. He moved with his mercenaries from place to place. Scotland, Ireland,

Wales, he successively and ably attacked. Every class in the kingdom suffered from the rapacious exactions of the tyrant, and all longed for relief.

At last the Pope dealt a final and fatal blow. He *deposed* John, declared his crown forfeited, and called upon Philip of France to carry out the sentence. John, who had a most able plan in his mind for the recovery of his French possessions, and who knew that his English barons were on the point of rebellion behind him, at once yielded and that shamefully.

He gave up his crown to the papal legate,[5] and received it back as the Pope's gift. This did more than anything else to weaken his influence over his people. Saxon kings, Norman conquerors, his father Henry, his brother Richard, all had maintained the independence of the throne. "John," cried all Englishmen, "has become the Pope's man." [6]

Meanness brought its own reward. His skilful scheme against France was completely baffled in the great battle of *Bouvines*,[7] where he and his allies were totally defeated. By this disaster to his arms, all his hopes of a French empire were shattered.

John and the Barons: Magna Charta.—It was of vast benefit to England that John was routed in his war with Philip. Had he returned at the head of a victorious army, English freedom would have suffered a deadly blow; it could not have been destroyed, but its progress might have been kept back for generations.

As it was, he found the great body of the Clergy and of the Barons, filled with a truly patriotic spirit and supported by the mass of the Saxons, banded against him and determined to exact the rightful liberties of every class of the people.

On a small island in the Thames, between Staines and Windsor, John met the representatives of the Barons. He yielded to them as completely as he had yielded to the Pope, and was compelled to sign the

KING JOHN SIGNING THE GREAT CHARTER.

great charter of English liberty—Magna Charta.[8] You will find this document fully described in larger histories; but there are a few facts about it which you should learn even now.

In the first place, it demanded *nothing new*; it merely put in clear language the rights which had belonged to the people from early Saxon times.

In the second place, it left out no class of Englishmen: the *Clergy* were to enjoy their privileges; the *Barons* were to be shielded from all irregular demands for money; all *Freemen* were to be left undisturbed in possession of their rights. Even *Serfs*[9] were not forgotten—their tools, their means of livelihood, were not to be taken from them.

Further, it established three safeguards of liberty:—no man was to be imprisoned except by the law of the land or the lawful judgment of his peers; no tax was to be imposed except by the Great Council; to none was justice to be refused, delayed, or sold.

To one man more than any other England owes this monument of liberty, and that is Stephen Langton. All honour then to one of the greatest of English patriots. As a skilful chemist will extract a healing medicine from a poisonous herb, so Langton and the Barons won the great safeguard of English freedom from the most wicked of English sovereigns.

John's Death.—John died as he had lived, breaking oaths and violating promises. He at once repudiated the charter, raised foreign mercenaries, and spread destruction and misery over all the realm. The barons, in disgust, summoned Louis, the son of the king of France, to depose John and take his place.

The French prince landed with an army and held the south-east of England; John, hurrying to meet him, saw all his supplies swept away in the Wash.[10] He immediately died—some say, of grief and rage at his loss; others, of a surfeit of peaches; a third account declares

that he was poisoned. Whatever was the cause of his death, he passed away unloved and unregretted.[11]

1. **Middle Ages**—from the fall of the Western Roman Empire in 476 (which marks the close of ancient history) to the capture of Constantinople by the Turks and the fall of the Eastern Roman Empire in 1453 (which mark the beginning of Modern History).
2. **Interdict**, a prohibition, a ban.
3. Except the baptism of the newly-born, and the administration of extreme unction to the dying.
4. **Excommunicated**, put *out of* the *communion* of the Church.
5. **Legate**, one sent with a special commission from the Pope.
6. The word *homage* signifies 'becoming the *man* of a superior.'
7. **Bouvines**, near Lille, in the extreme north-east of France. The battle was fought in 1214.
8. Some say that the whole transaction took place in a meadow, called *Runnymede*, on the Surrey side of the Thames near Staines.
9. **Serfs.** There were still, in a state of servitude, large numbers of people who were practically slaves.
10. **Wash**, an inlet on the east coast of England, noted for its swift tides.
11. The feeling with which John was regarded is shown by the fact that no King of England has been named John since his time.

HENRY III.—DANGERS TO NATIONAL LIBERTY 1216–1227.

HENRY III.

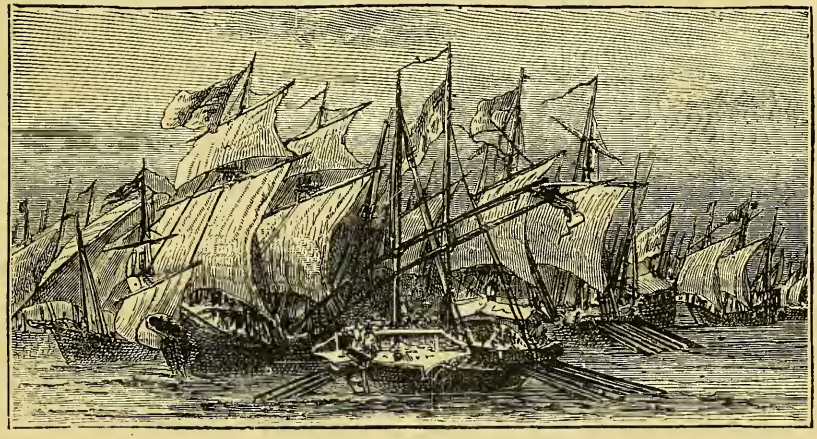
THE French Invaders.—Henry was only ten years of age when he came to the throne. He was a boy-king, and the government was directed for two years by the Earl of Pembroke.

A great danger threatened England. The French prince was master of the south-eastern part of the realm. He had been called over by the barons themselves; but he had already shown that, if he became King of England, the country would have to submit to all the troubles of a second conquest.

Pembroke acted with admirable prudence and in a truly English spirit. In the name of the young Henry he

accepted and confirmed the Charter;[1] he then had the boy crowned and obtained the support of the Pope. He also wrote wise letters to the discontented barons—appealing to their patriotism, urging the claims of an innocent young prince who had accepted the Charter, and promising forgiveness for any acts against the previous king.

The result was that Louis was deserted by all his English adherents. In spite of this he made a brave struggle, but was completely defeated at *Lincoln.*[2] The greater part of his army was captured in the streets, and



THE ENGLISH FLEET.

there was little bloodshed; so easily won, indeed, was the victory that the battle was known as the '*Fair of Lincoln.*' Yet upon that very 'Fair' depended the progress of English liberty.

A fleet bearing a great army was sent from France to aid Louis, but it was completely defeated by Hubert de Burgh.[3] Every English ship carried with it a quantity of quicklime; and when the wind was blowing towards the French, this was thrown up into the air so as to blind the eyes of the enemy. Showering arrows upon the confused mass, the English boarded their

vessels and destroyed the greater number. This was the *first great English naval victory since the Conquest.*

Louis was now glad to agree to a treaty and return to France. The patriotic Pembroke, who had acted so wisely, died shortly afterwards, amidst the universal sorrow of his grateful fellow-countrymen.

The Charter in Peril.—*Two* great dangers still threatened English national liberty during the youth of the Boy-King.

The first of these was the relation between the crown and the Papal See. You will remember that John had handed over his crown to the Pope; John's son Henry was, accordingly, regarded at Rome as the Pope's ward; and Pandulf, the recently-elected Bishop of Norwich, was sent over as legate with instructions to assume the guardianship of the young king and the supreme authority during his minority. But the noble patriot, Stephen Langton, Archbishop of Canterbury, stood forth as the champion of independent national government; he used his influence with the Pope for the recall of the legate, and obtained a promise that no other should be appointed as long as he lived.

The second danger arose from the actual presence in England of multitudes of aliens, who had been the mercenaries of John and still held positions of influence and wealth. These men hated the Charter, despised English law, and had no sympathy with the people. *Hubert de Burgh*, who had so skilfully won the great naval victory, succeeded in driving them from their castles. He thus, for a time, destroyed the foreign influence which was so hurtful to England's true progress. In all his acts, Hubert firmly upheld the Great Charter of liberty. He was therefore loved by the people.

The Return of the Aliens.—Henry, who was now of age, soon showed that he was not in spirit a true English king. He revived the hopeless policy of Henry II., and feebly sought to win back the French provinces. As he had none of the ability of his race, what was with them a fixed purpose became with him a weak wish, showing itself in a childish liking for all foreigners. He was also extremely fond of show, and his ideal of power was perfectly satisfied so long as he could shower costly gifts on the French favourites who thronged in thousands into the country.

The noble work of Pembroke, Langton, and De Burgh was gradually undone. The patriotic Hubert was hurled from power. Even his life was threatened. To save himself he fled for refuge to a chapel, but was dragged forth from it with sacrilegious violence; and he was rescued from death or life-long imprisonment only by the firmness of the English barons.

An interesting story shows how the people loved those who suffered for their liberties. A blacksmith, ordered to put irons upon the captured De Burgh, cried out: "Is not this that true and noble Hubert who has so often saved England from foreigners; and who has made England England? Never will I put irons on my country's saviour!"

Wave after wave of foreigners rolled upon England's shores. The king took into favour the great enemy of Hubert, one Peter des Roches, a native of Poitou; with him came a crowd of his fellow Poitevins.[4] This man openly declared that the English king had far more absolute power over peers and people than the French king had. "The charter," said he, "was got by force; it should be torn to pieces and thrown to the wind."

The same story was repeated again and again. Henry's marriage with Eleanor of Provence saw the wealth and power of England lavished upon the new queen's relatives and countrymen. The king's mother, who had after John's death married a French count,[5] now sent over her sons, Henry's half-brothers. These princes were at once raised to high positions, and proved themselves the most insolent enemies of England and freedom.

With foreign influence thus supreme, the old leaders of the patriotic party dead, and the people impoverished by ruinous taxation, the cause of English national liberty seemed well-nigh hopeless.

1. **The Great Charter** was confirmed no less than thirty-eight times.
2. In 1217.
3. **Hubert de Burgh.** See note 1, page 49. The battle took place off the Isle of Thanet, on St. Bartholomew's Day, 1217.
4. **Poitevin,** pronounced *Pwat-vang.*
5. See note 3, page 47.
6. **Benefices,** church livings, inferior to those of bishops, conferred by patrons.

DEFENCE OF THE CHARTER: THE GOOD SIR SIMON.

SIMON DE MONTFORT.

PROGRESS of National or English Party.—Against this invasion of aliens, who were so hostile to English law and liberty, all that was patriotic in the Church, all that was vigorous in the Baronage, all that was manly in the Saxons, combined in defence of England. Thus, once more, the folly of a king but helped forward the national cause.

Further, the Great Council of the nation, now gaining

the name of Parliament,[1] was able to prevent any serious violation of the Charter. It compelled Henry, whenever he asked for money, to confirm that great oath to respect the liberty of the people.

One noble patriot went much further. This was Sir Simon de Montfort, Earl of Leicester. This great man was the first leader who was really animated by the '*spirit of the age*.'[2] He saw that the safest way of making laws and securing liberty was to get the advice and consent of the *people themselves* in the proceedings of Parliament. The Nobles admired him; and they supported him so long as he was fighting for the Great Council of English Prelates and Barons against foreign intrusion and kingly illegality.

Again and again they deserted him when he went further and championed the cause of the lower orders. Their betrayal caused his death. He fell a martyr to his affection for the people. *They* loved him. 'The Good Sir Simon,' 'Sir Simon the Just—the Righteous,' were their favourite names for him. All the writers of his age, the thinkers, revered him. "He loves right and hates wrong," writes one; "the shield and defender of the kingdom, the enemy and expeller of aliens," says another.

One other element of progress remains to be mentioned. There took place in this reign a religious revival. Communities of Friars were established. These men were sworn to poverty, and in fact were true and earnest preachers.[3] They laboured among the very poorest of the people, teaching them that our Saviour died for *all* men and that all were *equal* in the sight of God. This kind of teaching did much to help on the cause of freedom so nobly championed by Simon de Montfort.

Triumph of the National Party.—The exactions of the king, with the insolence of the aliens, increased year by year. At last the Barons determined to bear it no longer. At a meeting of the Great Council at Oxford, known as the *Mad Parliament*,[4] they appeared in arms and appointed twenty-four representatives to secure reforms. They also chose a council of fifteen to advise the king.

These fifteen drew up a famous decree called the *Provisions of Oxford.* These 'Provisions' were the first public acts issued in the *English* language.[5] England was determined to be *England*, not a province of France. The enactments were important and decisive. The Royal Castles were to be placed in the hands of Englishmen, and Parliament was to meet three times a year.

The king swore to obey, but his half-brothers and the rest of the aliens resisted. The determined Barons, however, compelled them to surrender the castles and leave the country.

The Pope absolved the king from his oath, and the dispute was referred to the King of France. The decision was in favour of Henry, and the Barons offered to yield everything but the 'Provision' against the employment of foreigners. This the king would not accept.

A Civil war was the result. A great battle was fought at *Lewes*[6] in Sussex. Prince Edward, a splendid soldier, attacked the wing opposed to him—men from London, the citizens of which city had insulted his mother.[7] He routed them, and followed in hot pursuit. When he returned he found that De Montfort had completely defeated the rest of the royal army, and had

taken the king prisoner. He, too, was forced to surrender.

The good Sir Simon was now the real ruler of the country. He showed his truly patriotic spirit by calling a *Parliament in which all classes of the people were*

NOBLE AND PEASANT IN FEUDAL TIMES.

represented. As in the Great Council of former times, there came the *Chief Barons* and the *Higher Clergy.* Further, reviving an old custom, he summoned two *Knights* to be sent by each *county.* But there were for the first time representatives of the *Burghers* of the

realm, two from each *city*. This assembly, representative of knights and burghers, which met in the year 1265, deserves to be called the *First House of Commons*.

Death of the Patriot Earl, 1265.—Prince Edward escaped by a very ingenious trick. While out riding with his keepers, he induced them to race against one another till their horses were thoroughly tired. He had kept his own horse—a very swift one—quite fresh, and galloped away easily from his guard. He at once set himself to gather an army to fight for his father.

Many of the Barons had no sympathy with De Montfort's love for the Commons. They now deserted him and joined the prince. Edward, thus strengthened, defeated De Montfort's son,[8] who was marching somewhat tardily to join the earl in South Wales.

De Montfort lay with a comparatively small army at *Evesham* on the Avon in Worcestershire. He was waiting for the son whom he would never see again; and in the early dawn of an August morning, saw a well-ordered army approaching with the familiar banners of his friends. Only when too late, looking down upon them from a high church-tower, he observed that Edward's standard mingled with the rest.

As the skilful arrangement of the enemy showed itself, he exclaimed, "Ah, that is not your own, I taught you how to fight." When the overpowering numbers of the foe became evident, he sighed, "God have mercy upon our souls, for our bodies are the prince's."

His friends thronged round him—he urging them to save themselves, they refusing to flee.

"Father," said his son Henry, "do you escape to fight again for England, while I keep back the foe and die for you."

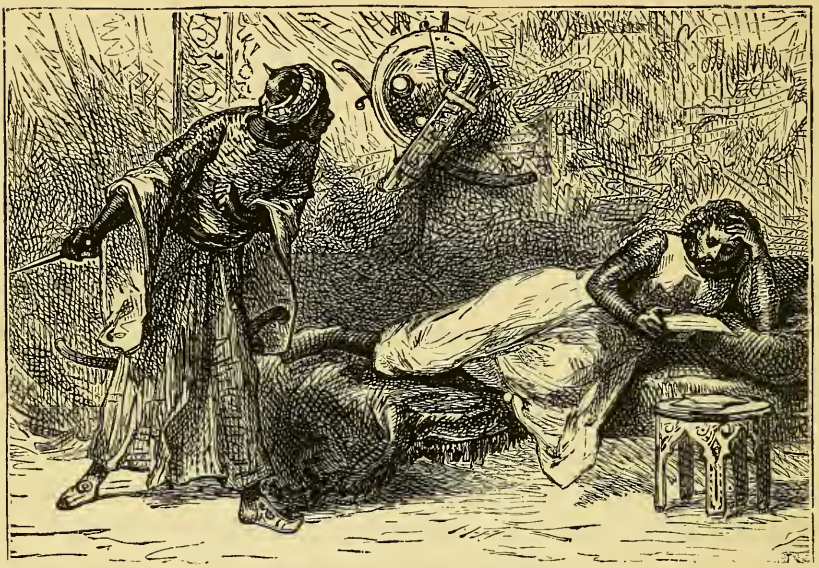
Not one among that band of heroes would desert the others. The battle began. While Prince Edward was securing the safety of his father, who had been with De Montfort's army and had been nearly slain, the enemies of the patriot gathered round him. He fought 'like a giant.' One by one his comrades fell around, but he 'stood like a tower.' Wielding his two-handed sword, he cleared for himself a space in which to die, and sank overpowered by sheer numbers. His son was found lying by his side. Thus was slain the noblest of the old English patriots.

Not in vain did he die. The people wept for him, and forgot not his teaching. Prince Edward, too, revered and mourned for him; love for his father alone had caused him to oppose the warrior-statesman. The good Sir Simon had not only taught his conqueror to fight, but had inspired him with his own regard for law, and had convinced him that the people themselves should have a voice in the councils of the nation.

During the rest of Henry's reign, there was peace. The Commons were not again summoned to Parliament, but the Barons held firmly to the main points for which they had fought—England for the English, and the Charter to be obeyed.

Prince Edward set out with his bride to take part in what proved to be the last crusade, and the close of the reign found him still away from England.

1. **A national party** under Simon de Montfort was formed in 1238, from which time the National Assembly is known both in records and history by the name of *Parliament*.
2. **Spirit of the age.** See page 14.
3. **Friars.** The preaching friars of this revival belonged to the two orders of Dominicans and Franciscans—known in England as the Black and the Grey Friars from the colour of their dress.
4. Assembled in 1258.
5. These provisions, along with the Magna Charta, were proclaimed in three languages—Latin, French, and English.
6. Fought in 1264.
7. **The Londoners** had compelled Eleanor to leave London, and had pelted her with stones as she was being rowed up the Thames.
8. **At Kenilworth,** De Montfort's chief stronghold, in Warwickshire.



EDWARD AND THE ASSASSIN.

EDWARD I.—THE GREATEST OF THE PLANTAGENETS.

EDWARD I.

A NOBLE Wife.—The Crusade[1] which Edward joined, the eighth and last, proved a complete failure. The religious fervour which had led to these repeated expeditions to Palestine now died out, and the Holy City has been to this day left in the hands of unbelievers.[2]

A romantic incident in this Crusade has often formed the theme of poem and picture. One sultry evening, after the exhausting heat of a summer's day in Palestine, Edward was resting in his

tent. A messenger arrived with a letter from the Emir[3] of Jaffa,[4] from whom such communications were so frequent that the man was at once allowed to enter. As Edward, without rising from his couch, was reading the letter, the treacherous Arab stabbed him. The Prince sprang to his feet and struck the assassin[5] to the ground with a stool which stood beside his bed.

Although the wound itself was not serious, yet all were afraid that the dagger might have been poisoned. If that were the case, nothing could avert Edward's fate. Yet, *one* would risk death for his sake—for love laughs at danger and gladly sacrifices itself to save the loved one—Edward's noble wife, Eleanor of Castile, kneeling down beside his couch and applying her lips to the wound, sought to draw the poison from it. All believed she saved her husband's life, and Edward repaid her devotion with life-long affection.

They were in Italy on their homeward journey when they received tidings that they had lost their two little children, and then that Henry, the king, was dead.[6] "God can give me children in their stead," Edward mourned, "but no other father shall I ever see."

Character and Aims.—Edward was undoubtedly the flower of the Plantagenets. He had the same strictly legal mind as Henry II., equalled that king in energy, and surpassed him as a lawgiver and statesman—his views were more enlightened, and his aims more attainable. Not inferior to Richard in valour, he was much his superior as a general; finally, he possessed all John's ability without a trace of his foul heartlessness. He had, however, a good deal of the passionate temper of his race, and on one or two occasions acted very cruelly. On the other hand, his bearing towards his father, his wife, and

his children, proves that he had a warm and loving heart.

Regarding Edward as *a ruler*, we find that his aims show him to have been a true disciple of Simon de Montfort. He was animated by the same love of England which had so nobly manifested itself in Barons as well as Commons during the preceding reign, and he was fully prepared to carry out the teaching of the dead patriot—'a parliament for the people.' He showed himself determined to establish *good and orderly government* by wise and beneficent laws, to guard *English interests*, and to foster the *national spirit*. The one defect in his plan was that he wished to accomplish these admirable ends by a *despotic monarchy*,[7] subjected only to the restrictions of law.

To understand Edward's aims fully, we must also consider him as a king bent, like his great-grandfather, upon extending the bounds of his kingdom. In this aspect, Edward has been described as 'a man with an idea.' Although he still held possessions in the south-west of France, he had given up the vain dream of an Anglo-French Empire. Animated by a truly national spirit, he confined his ambition to the island in which he lived. He saw that England, Scotland, and Wales were fitted to form one great country; and to effect their union became the master-thought of his life.

1. Begun by St. Louis of France in 1270.
2. Palestine still forms part of the Mahometan Empire of Turkey.
3. **Emir.** This title was originally given to all the descendants of Mahomet.
4. **Jaffa**, the Joppa of Scripture, the sea-port of Jerusalem.
5. **Assassin**, the name applied to the followers of a chief called the 'Old Man of the Mountain,' at whose bidding they were ready to do the most desperate deed. The word comes from the Arabic *hashish*, an opiate made of hemp leaves.
6. Edward was the first of our sovereigns, the beginning of whose reign was dated not from the coronation day, but from the death of the preceding monarch.
7. **Despotic monarchy**, *i.e.*, absolute monarchy, one in which all the powers of government are vested in the monarch.

THE GREAT LAWGIVER.

The House of Commons.—Edward had been deeply impressed with De Montfort's scheme of an Assembly representing the three Estates[1] of the realm—Barons, Clergy, and Commons. The first complete Parliament was not held indeed till 1295, but the very earliest statute of the reign declares that it was passed with the consent of the 'commonalty.'

One great motive of the king in calling the inhabitants of the *towns* as well as those of the *shires* to send representatives to the Great Council, was the need of money for his wars. Up to this time, the sovereign had mainly depended for supplies upon the Barons and the Clergy. The cities, meanwhile, had been steadily increasing in prosperity. That unrivalled commercial spirit which has carried the British flag into every part of the 'great world of waters,' had begun to manifest itself; and the burghers were now almost as able as the nobles to contribute to the expenses of government.

Edward felt that by far the best way of drawing revenue from the growing wealth of the cities was by the willing consent of men chosen by the citizens themselves. He held rightly that all who benefited by the power of England should help to support the government; but he saw clearly that it was but just that those who had to pay should be consulted about the measures for which the money was required. He in fact accepted a principle which became famous long afterwards—"Taxation without representation is tyranny."[2]

The King and the Law.—The great Plantagenet was a sincere upholder of just law and equitable government. The first *Act of Parliament*[3] passed in his reign revived

the old constitution of the country. Its very object was "to awake those languid laws which had long been lulled to sleep;" and it expressly limited the sums which the king could legally claim by feudal law.

When his impatient temper had led Edward to seize from the merchants what he required for war, instead of waiting for the consent of Parliament, he acknowledged that he had done wrong and promised never to break the law again. This is one of the very points of this monarch's greatness. It was not that he was faultless, for he often acted very passionately and harshly; but, when he saw his mistake and where he had done wrong, he was ready to express his sorrow and to strive to do better.

The Great Charter had noble protectors in the Barons, and grateful supporters in the Commons. Edward, who might at times have forgotten his youthful admiration of that safeguard of liberty, was, therefore, brought not only to ratify[4] it again and again, but even to extend it. These repeated confirmations firmly established the principle that *no tax whatever* should be levied *without the consent of Parliament.* Kings did at times after this endeavour to exact arbitrary payments from the people; but from this time this was known by all to be illegal, and no king for three hundred years dared to make a habit of it. The first who tried to do so was the unfortunate Charles I., and the result was that he lost both his crown and his life in the attempt.

It was a good thing for England that, even under a generous king like Edward, its liberties had brave guardians. For this able prince wished, as has been said, to rule as a *despotic* monarch subject *only to the law.* He did not like that laws should be made 'by the *counsel and consent of Parliament;*' he preferred them to

be enacted '*by the King*' with merely 'the *advice* of his Council and the *assent* of Parliament.'[5]

But not even to so great a ruler as Edward, would the barons yield. He turned in vain to seek the support of the *citizens* against the nobles, for the Saxons or English people were now becoming strong. They were most willing to help their king, except when he sought to *deprive them of their liberties.* One incident will show what the spirit of the Commons really was.

In the year 1291, after Edward had defeated Wallace at the battle of Falkirk, the barons insisted that Edward should fulfil a promise he had made to ratify the charter and grant certain additions to it. After much delay, he gave the required confirmation, but added the words '*saving the rights of the Crown.*' The barons were so deeply incensed that they left the royal presence; and with 'Remember Runnymede'[6] as their stern watchword, they began to prepare themselves to deal with this king as their fathers had dealt with the faithless John.

If you think for a moment, you will see why the nobles were so bitterly opposed to these words. The whole dispute with Edward and his predecessors had been as to what were the true *rights* of the Crown. Many powers that the king held to be his 'rights,' the Barons, Clergy, and Commons held to be '*wrongs,*' 'acts of tyranny,'—powers which had never legally belonged to the Crown, but had been forcibly seized by it. Thus, to put such words into a new law, could only serve to keep up the old dispute, and would leave matters quite unsettled.

Edward thought he would on this occasion get the help of the Commons. Accordingly, he ordered the Charter to be read at the Cross of St. Paul's in London.

As clause after clause was heard confirming the rights and liberties of the people, enthusiastic cheers were given

ENGLISH MEN-AT-ARMS AT FALKIRK.

by the mighty mass of eager citizens who pressed around. But when the ominous words 'saving the rights of the Crown' were uttered, a torrent of groans and hisses burst from the indignant throng.

The king was too prudent to resist Barons and Commons combined. He at once yielded, and fully confirmed the Charter without the hated qualification.

When Edward came to the throne, the rural districts of England were in a very disorderly condition. Bands of desperadoes, called 'Trailbâtons' or 'Cudgel-carriers,' filled the country—outlaws, who not only robbed and murdered on their own account, but were prepared to sell their services for the perpetration of any outrage, however criminal.

To put an end to this state of affairs, Edward passed a great law, thoroughly organising each *county* both to defend the realm from without and keep order within its bounds. The courts of law were re-arranged and an efficient police established. Among other regulations, no bushes or trees were to be allowed to grow near the roads; it was feared that these would afford shelter to lurking highwaymen. In this way, by the strict administration of law, order was at last secured.

Thus, you see, that this great ruler not only passed many excellent new measures, but strove to carry out the existing laws firmly and justly. When he found, for example, that the judges were accused of accepting bribes, he had them brought to trial, and severely punished those found guilty.

In these and many other ways, Edward nobly maintained his claim to the title of the English Justinian [7] or Lawgiver.

1. **Estates**, see note 8, page 22.
2. This was the motto of the founders of the United States of America in their dispute with the mother-country.
3. At that time, King, Lords, and Commons sat in one chamber—they began to occupy separate chambers in the reign of Edward III. The modern principle, that every measure must receive the consent of a majority in both Houses of Parliament and the assent of the sovereign before it became law, was not finally established until the reign of Edward IV.
4. **Ratify**, literally, to *make sure*, to confirm.
5. Edward actually altered the words "by the counsel and consent of Parliament," to "by the King with the advice of his Council and the assent of Parliament."
6. **Runnymede**, see page 52.
7. **Justinian**, the Eastern Roman Emperor who in 529 and 534 issued a complete code of the Roman law. Napoleon the great did the same for France. It has not yet been done for England.

HOW WALES WAS UNITED TO ENGLAND.

LLEWELLYN.

THE People of Wales.—Before speaking of what is called the Conquest of Wales, it would be well to recall what we have already learned about its people.

There were at this time in England three distinct races, each having its own language. The great mass of the population was of *Saxon and Danish* origin, speaking what was really in all its essential features the English tongue; the *Norman* conquerors used a French dialect; finally, the descendants of the old Britons spoke Cymric, or, as we call it, Welsh. It is also worth remembering that most of the learned books were still written in the Roman or Latin language.[1]

The people of Wales were thus the descendants of those ancient Cymri[2] who had so bravely opposed the Romans, and had struggled so heroically against the Saxon hosts. They now loved their hills as much as their fathers had loved the richer lands they had lost, and were ready to meet with undaunted courage the whole power of the greatest of the Plantagenet Kings.

These brave mountaineers were in no respect a barbarous people. Their traditional hero was that 'peerless Prince Arthur,' whom our great poet Spenser[3] has

taken as the model of a perfect knight and gentleman,[4] and whom Tennyson has revealed to us as his ideal of a noble Christian king.[5] They excelled in music and poetry, and much of the gracefulness and beauty of English literature is directly due to the vivid imagination and quick wit of the Welsh.

Their richest outbursts of song had flowed forth during the fierce struggle with the Saxons, and its most pathetic strains had wailed over the tomb of the stainless Arthur. But never had the harp ceased to keep alive the spirit of freedom in their hearts; and now again, during their struggle with Edward, a group of noble bards animated their patriotism, preserved the glory of their victories, and wept over their defeat.

A WELSH HARPER.

The Gathering of the Storm.—You have already read of Edward's grand idea of uniting into one great empire the different parts of the island of Great Britain. The first step towards the carrying out of this project seemed to him to be the union of Wales with England. He was anxious to accomplish his purpose as gently as possible; and he would have been quite content if Llewellyn,[6] who was then Prince of Wales, had agreed to become his vassal and rank along with (or even a little above) the great feudal Barons of England.

But the Welsh had never willingly submitted to the

former Saxon kings; they had always struggled for freedom as their birthright, and they saw no reason why the defeat of their old enemies should make them the subjects of the conquerors. Again and again had the attempts of the Norman sovereigns to enslave them failed. Nay, had not this same Edward, in his father's reign, been baffled in a fruitless endeavour to subdue them? How could Llewellyn, who had admired the great Simon de Montfort, and who was betrothed to the daughter of that noble patriot, do homage to one whom he regarded both as the enemy of his country and the slayer of his friend?

Whispers of old prophecies filled the mountain air. Had it not been said by an ancient seer that a Welsh prince would be crowned in London when money was made round,[7] and was not that true now? Did not Arthur still live in Avalon,[8] and had it not been promised that he would come down to lead his people to victory? Who could tell that the long-looked-for time had not come when the Cymri would rush down from the hills and sweep the fertile plains which had belonged to their fathers, driving Saxon and Norman alike back to their homes across the sea?

The pulse of this free people beat high, and they were ready to fight and die rather than surrender the liberty which was dearer to them than life.

The Storm Bursts.—After repeated but vain attempts to win over the Welsh prince, Edward proceeded to use stronger measures. He captured Llewelyn's affianced wife, Eleanor de Montfort,[9] and refused to give her up. The prince himself was declared a traitor, and war was declared in the winter of the year 1276.

It is strange and sad how often, in wars of indepen-

dence, treason within aids the attack from without. Arthur's nephew, Mordred, had been the deadly foe of that patriot king; Harold's brother, Tostig, aided in the overthrow of English freedom; and Llewellyn's brother, David, now acted as a recreant to his country, and joined the invaders with all his adherents.

Edward's army gathered at *Worcester;* and the Welsh prince, weakened by the desertion of the traitor, was gradually driven back towards Snowdon by the overwhelming force of the enemy. Meanwhile, a fleet from the Cinque Ports[10] cut Llewellyn off from Anglesea; and thus the patriotic defenders were literally starved into submission.

At first very heavy penalties were inflicted upon the conquered prince; but in justice to Edward, it must be said that the most humiliating of these were one by one removed. Llewellyn was left in entire possession of Anglesea, and received several baronies round Snowdon. Finally, his marriage to Eleanor de Montfort was celebrated in England with great pomp. David, who was made an earl and liberally rewarded, remained in England. Edward thus seemed to have attained his purpose without much bloodshed, and was, no doubt, thoroughly satisfied.

1. There are *four* literatures in the early periods of our history:— *Celtic*, including Welsh and Gaelic; *Anglo-Saxon*, *Anglo-Norman*, and *Latin*.
2. **Cymri**, the actual Welsh form is *Cymru*.
3. **Spenser** was one of the greatest of the Elizabethan poets.
4. His chief work is the "Fœrie Queen." In a letter to Sir Walter Raleigh, he clearly explains his purpose in taking Arthur as his hero.
5. **Tennyson**, the present poet Laureate, in the "Idylls of the King."
6. This is that Llewellyn of whom the following touching story is told: On returning home one evening from the hunt, his noble dog Gelert, whom he sadly missed during the sports of the day, bounded to meet him. The fangs of the dog were streaming with blood, and a strange uneasiness caused Llewelyn to hurry to the cradle of his infant son. The cradle was overturned, the child could nowhere be seen. Without a moment's thought, Llewellyn leapt to the conclusion that the dog had killed his son, and instantly stabbed it to the heart. At that moment the infant's cry was heard from beneath, and pulling aside the coverings of the cradle, Llewellyn found the babe unharmed. But by it lay a gaunt wolf which the faithful Gelert had killed.
7. Until this time halfpennies and farthings

were made by clipping the penny into *halves* and *fourths*. This was now forbidden, and special round coins were made instead.

8. **Avalon**, the fabled land where, according to the old legends, Arthur was said to dwell until the time came to deliver his race.

9. **Eleanor**, daughter of Sir Simon de Montfort. See pp. 58-63.

10. **Cinque Ports** were the five ports of Sandwich, Deal, Dover, Hythe, and Romney, on the Kentish coast. To these were after added Rye, Winchelsea, and Hastings in the adjoining county of Sussex. These were at that time the most important southern ports, and were bound by charter to provide a certain number of ships for the defence of the realm.

HOW WALES WAS UNITED TO ENGLAND

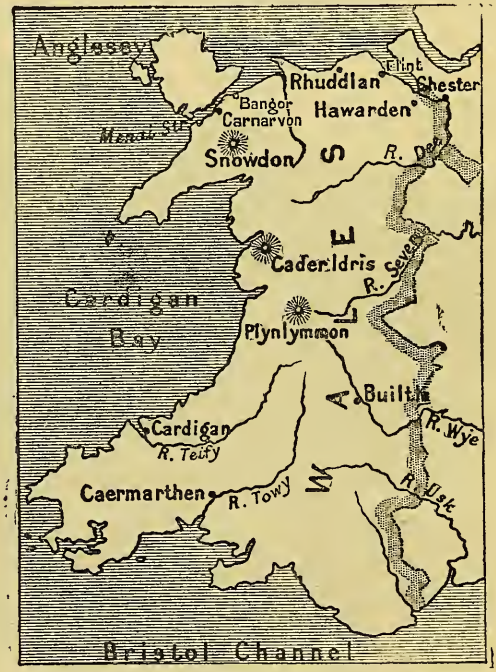
(*continued*).

Renewal of the Struggle.—For a year or two all went well. Edward strove to rule justly. He removed his soldiers from the country, leaving only a few garrisons in the castles; and he extended to Wales the same strict but impartial government he had imposed upon England. But the Welsh had always been accustomed to their own laws, and felt it very bitter to have new ones forced upon them by an alien. They could see no good in these strange enactments, and murmured deeply. The roads, too, which Edward ordered to be cut through their country, they regarded with jealous suspicion and aversion. They were ready once more to throw off the yoke which galled them so sorely.

David, who had played the traitor before, struck the first blow. No doubt, shame must have touched him that *he*, the son of a race of patriots and kings, should have lifted his sword against the freedom of his country. In the midst of a raging storm, he suddenly seized the castle of Hawarden,[1] where the English governor resided, and hurried that functionary off to the hills. On all sides, the passionate mountaineers rose, and the English settlers were slaughtered. Llewellyn having joined his

brother, the castles of Rhuddlan[1] and Flint were quickly captured. They advanced towards Chester, destroying all before them.

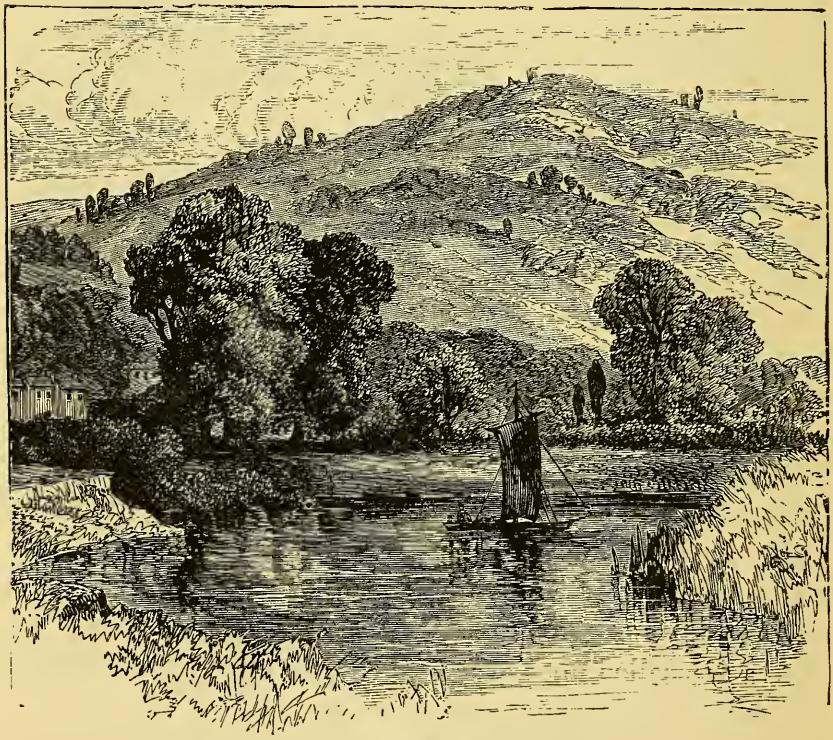
Edward, who could hardly be convinced that the conquest he had thought so secure was lost, that Llewellyn as well as David was in arms, and that all the work would have to be done over again, set himself resolutely to the task. At first, his forces suffered terribly in the severe winter weather. One division was cut to pieces while crossing[2] from Anglesea to Caernarvon, and Edward himself was several times repulsed.



WALES.

Close of the Struggle.—But the determined Plantagenet only made his preparations the more carefully. He called upon the whole of England to make a grand national effort. The Archbishop of Canterbury pronounced sentence of excommunication against the rebels, parliament granted liberal supplies, and forces were gathered from all sides. Yet the Welsh fought very bravely; and had it not been for the accidental fall of Llewellyn, Edward's purpose might have been foiled in Wales as it was afterwards in Scotland. Mountaineer was set on mountaineer—Basques[3] from the

Pyrenees being brought over to drive the Welsh from their strongholds—and woodmen cut down the forests which gave shelter to the insurgents. As the weather improved, Edward collected a great army near Caermarthen to attack from the south; and he ordered the standard of the 'Golden Dragon' (dear to the memories



THE WYE.

of the Britons) to be borne in front, as a sign that mercy would be shown to all who sought it.

Leaving his brother to guard the passes of the North, Llewellyn hurried to meet this southern force. He prepared to oppose the advance of the enemy on the steep banks of the rapid river Wye.[4] Alas! all his hopes were in vain. While he was resting after a weary day's

marching, an English force surprised the few Welsh soldiers who surrounded the hut where he slept. Roused from his slumbers by the clash of arms, he rushed hastily out to join in the fray, was suddenly encountered by an English knight, and fell fighting for the mountain-land he had loved so well.[5]

Not till the dead were being stripped of their arms by the victors was the patriot-prince recognised. His head was cut off and sent to the English king as a proof that his enemy had fallen. The Welsh prophecy was mockingly fulfilled when the people of London saw the ghastly head of the dead hero borne past them crowned with ivy.

David still held out among the mountains, but was at last betrayed to the English king and condemned to the cruel death of a traitor. Wales was then finally united to England.

The First Prince of Wales.—The closing scene of the conquest has often been told. Edward, anxious to win the Welsh chiefs to a willing submission, promised to give them a prince who had been born in Wales and who could not speak a word of English. When they came to Caernarvon Castle to pay their homage to such a prince, the king presented to them his infant son, Edward, who had been born in that very fortress where they were assembled, who knew nothing of the hated language of their enemies, and who had done the Welsh no injury. This babe, it is said, the chiefs acknowledged as Prince of Wales[6]—a title which has always been borne since by the eldest sons of the English kings.

Thus ended the great struggle. Considering the size of Wales and the great power of Edward, all must admit that the Welsh fought most bravely for their freedom.

Although a part of England, their country has always remained practically free. They still speak the old language, and have the same independent spirit as their fathers. Of no part of Great Britain are the people more peaceable and contented; and this is largely due to the firm manliness with which they have at all times maintained their rights, and the willing respect they have always paid to just laws.

1. **Hawarden** and **Rhuddlan**, in Flint.
2. Crossing the Menai Straits.
3. **Basques**, the descendants of the old inhabitants of Spain.
4. **Wye**, a beautiful river in South Wales, sometimes called the Rhone of England.
5. Llewellyn died in 1282.
6. This took place in 1284.

THE SCOTTISH WAR OF INDEPENDENCE.

EDWARD, Overlord of Scotland.—Alexander III. of Scotland died in 1286,[1] and was succeeded by his grandchild,[2] a little girl of two years. Edward at once seized the opportunity of fully carrying out the great national project of which the Conquest of Wales formed but the first part, and sought to arrange a marriage between the young heiress and his son. The proposal was gladly agreed to by the Scots, and it seemed likely that the union of Scotland and England would be effected without bloodshed.

All was changed, however, by the death of the child-queen in 1290. At once, numerous claimants for the vacant throne started up; and all seemed willing to leave the decision of the matter to Edward. That king accordingly summoned a meeting of the Scottish nobility;[3] but, before settling the question of the succession to the crown, he put forward his own claim to be recognised as Overlord[4] of Scotland.

Now most of the competitors were not Scots but Normans, and they all readily acknowledged Edward's superiority. He then decided in favour of John Baliol, a powerful baron of the north of England.[5]

Baliol soon found how difficult it was at once to satisfy the proud spirit of his new subjects and the exacting demands of the haughty Overlord to whom he had done homage; and, at last, his nobles forced him to make an alliance with France and prepare for war with England.

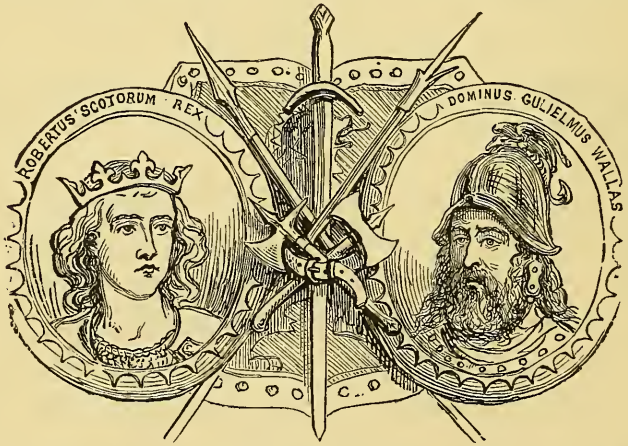
Edward at once marched northwards to subdue one whom he looked upon as an ungrateful and rebellious vassal. Success attended his arms. He captured the strong castle of Berwick, defeated the Scotch army in a great battle at *Dunbar*, and sent Baliol as a captive to the Tower.

He at the same time removed to England the Scottish regalia[6] and coronation-stone.[7] This stone was called the 'Stone of Destiny,' and it had been prophesied that a Scottish sovereign would reign wherever it was set up. It is now under the coronation chair at Westminster Abbey; and our gracious Queen is, as the Scots proudly boast, a descendant of their old line of kings.

The Hero of Scotland.—In all his dealings with Scotland, Edward believed that he was acting in strict accordance with feudal law. He was convinced of the justice of his claim, had made an agreement with the *barons* of the country, and it seemed to him that nothing more was necessary. But, although many Normans held possessions in the south of Scotland, there had been no 'conquest' of that country as there had been of England, most of the inhabitants of the West and North were not even of English race,[8] and the *people*

felt that they had a right to be heard in any agreement concerning the government of their country.

Accordingly, a leader of the Commons of Scotland soon appeared—one who had made no oath of allegiance to Edward, and would never yield with life the independence of his native land. This was Sir William Wallace, the knight of Ellerslie,[9] who for some time carried on a guerilla warfare against the English invaders. There are many wild legends told of this patriot's bravery, gigantic strength, and undying love for his country; therefore it is no wonder that, although



despised by the so-called 'Scottish' nobility,[10] he was beloved by the people of Scotland, and the number of his devoted followers steadily increased.

At length, he won a complete victory at *Stirling Bridge*[11] over a great English army under the Earl of Surrey and Cressingham.[12] Like the hero Tell in Switzerland, the Scottish leader was thus able to show that an army of peasants or yeomen could successfully cope with a body of steel-clad knights. In this way, the victories of these patriots are of the greatest interest, and mark

a distinct era in the history of liberty among the oppressed peoples of Europe.

For a short time, Scotland was freed from her invaders; and her army, entering England in its turn, cruelly ravaged the northern counties. Meanwhile, Edward was hurrying over from Flanders to punish those whom he regarded as rebels and traitors. He led a magnificent host into Scotland; and, splendidly aided by his English archers with their mighty bows, he defeated the Scots with great slaughter at *Falkirk*.[13]

After this fatal field, Wallace was forced to lead a wandering life. He was ever the determined enemy of Edward, and refused in any way to acknowledge that sovereign as his country's lord; but at last he was betrayed into the hands of the conqueror, taken to London, and there put to a cruel and barbarous death.

All agree that this is the greatest stain on Edward's fame, for he ought to have treated a brave and fallen foe more generously. It must be admitted that the stern law-giver thought he was acting justly: he looked upon Wallace as a law-breaker and rebel, as guilty of treason,[14] and as responsible for all the bloodshed of the war. But Wallace, as he himself said, was no traitor to Edward, for he had never been his subject; and he fought against that king's soldiers only because they had come to oppress his native country of Scotland.

The story of Wallace, told in the rough verse of a minstrel called Blind Harry, has always had the most wonderful power over the hearts of his countrymen. They have ever regarded him as their national hero, and many Scotsmen have been nerved to do noble and daring deeds in order to be 'like Sir William Wallace.'

Scotland and England are now joined into one great

kingdom; and every Briton would still fight, as bravely as the Scottish leader did, in defence of his sea-girt isle.

The Struggle Renewed.—A struggle was kept up under Comyn [15] for about five years, during which time Edward's attention was occupied by difficulties in England and France. But in 1303 a *third great invasion of Scotland* [16] was made, and the last stronghold [17] yielded to the English king.

In the same year that Wallace perished, a new constitution was thrust upon the humbled country: English law was everywhere imposed; and the Scots were to have no separate national assembly, but were to send representatives to the English Parliament at Westminster. The work of conquest seemed complete.

It was thus evident that Edward intended to appoint no successor to Baliol, but purposed to incorporate Scotland with England. Accordingly, Robert Bruce, the grandson of the competitor for the crown, sought to come to an agreement with John Comyn, who represented the elder branch of the Scottish royal family. The latter treacherously reported the whole to Edward; and Bruce, who was at the English court, only escaped imprisonment by immediate flight.

At a meeting with Comyn in the church of the Greyfriars at Dumfries, the angry fugitive charged him with treachery; Comyn denied his guilt, passionate reproaches were interchanged, and Bruce stabbed his rival upon the very steps of the altar.

There was now no going back; Bruce was forced to place himself at the head of the Scottish national movement, and once more the standard which had fallen from the hand of Wallace was raised aloft. Many hearts in

Scotland were still burning with the 'celestial fire' of patriotism, so that hundreds of enthusiastic followers rallied round the new leader; and in a month he was crowned at Scone.

When tidings of these events reached Edward, his rage and indignation were kindled against one who was in his eyes a perjured subject[18] and a sacrilegious assassin. He at once sent a small army under the Earl of Pembroke to keep the insurrection from spreading; and, although now old and unfit for the toil of battle, determined to lead in person a *fourth great invasion* of the indomitable northern land. The Prince of Wales, with two hundred and seventy of his companions, was knighted in order to join worthily in the enterprise; and all swore a solemn oath[19] never to sleep two nights in the same place until they had brought the murderers of Comyn to justice and had crushed the rebellious Scots.

Three months after his coronation, Bruce was defeated by Pembroke, and forced to take refuge in the hills. For some time he led a wandering and adventurous life. An old poet[20] gives us a vivid picture of his gallant bearing. Tall, muscular, and active, he was in combat the best and the bravest—leading the van in attack, and protecting the rear in retreat; while on the wearisome march he was ever ready with song and story to revive the drooping spirits of his followers.

At length his queen was taken captive, and himself driven to the western isles. During the winter he was hunted from island to island,[21] suffering much hardship and privation, and sometimes nearly in despair. Still he struggled on; and in spring he suddenly re-appeared, captured his own castle of Carrick, and successively defeated the Earls of Pembroke and Gloucester.

The aged king, though now very feeble, roused himself to crush his foe. Sending on his army in advance, he was borne slowly forward on a litter. The effort was too much for him. The spirit was as lion-like as ever, but the body had no longer its former strength; and the old warrior had at last to yield to the Conqueror of all. He died at Burgh-on-Sands,[22] within a few miles of the country he had so anxiously striven to reach. The ruling passion was strong in death, for he ordered his bones to be carried in front of the invading army. His son, however, disregarded his wish, and buried him in Westminster Abbey.

1. He was killed by the fall of his horse over a high cliff between Kinghorn and Burntisland in Fifeshire.
2. Called the 'Maid of Norway,' being the child of Alexander's daughter and Eric of Norway.
3. At Norham on the Tweed.
4. **Overlord**, *i.e.*, feudal superior.
5. This decision was legally right. The three chief competitors were John Baliol, Robert Bruce, and John Comyn.
6. **Regalia**, *i.e.*, the royal insignia—the crown, sceptre, &c.
7. **Coronation-stone.** According to tradition, it was the stone on which Jacob rested his head at Bethel.
8. The south-east of Scotland was inhabited by people akin to the English, and the land was feudally held by Norman barons. The west and north, however, was occupied by Celts, and the kings of Scotland before Baliol were of that race.
9. In Renfrewshire.
10. Most of these were Normans.
11. 11th September 1297.
12. The Lord Treasurer of Scotland.
13. 11th July 1298.
14. His sentence charged him with being "a felon, an outlaw, and a traitor."
15. Son of the Comyn who was the competitor for the crown.
16. The *first* was against Baliol, the *second* against Wallace.
17. Stirling Castle.
18. Unlike Wallace, Bruce had taken the oath of allegiance.
19. The manner in which the oath was taken is interesting. Two swans, the emblems of constancy and fidelity, were brought in in a golden net, and each knight took the oath with his hand upon their heads.
20. Called Barbour.
21. It was at this time, while hiding in the island of Rathlin, off the north-east coast of Ireland, that the well-known incident of 'Bruce and the Spider' took place.
22. Near Carlisle.

EDWARD II.—RENEWAL OF THE STRUGGLE BETWEEN THE BARONS AND THE CROWN. (1307–1327.)

EDWARD II.

CHARACTER of the New King.—The greatest of the Plantagenets was succeeded by the weakest. As a private individual, the new king would not have been unamiable: he was fond of country life, steadfast in his affections, kindly in disposition, and had a taste for music and the fine arts somewhat in advance of his time. But as a king, there is nothing in his reign to merit approval or excite sympathy for his unhappy fate. He cared not for the duties of his throne, seemed to regard England as specially made for his pleasures, altogether neglected the administration of the law, and thus left the people exposed to the oppression of numerous tyrannical officials.

His indolent but essentially selfish nature led him to select as his friends those who could amuse him, and to reject those who would have aided him in the government of his realm. In this way he surrendered himself to the influence of useless favourites, and made so many powerful enemies that the conduct of national business was paralysed and the very safety of the throne endangered.

As might have been expected from such a king, *the*

strong policy of Edward I. was completely reversed. The newly-crowned sovereign dismissed and even punished his father's ministers, whom he had learned to look upon as spies upon his pleasures rather than as men who would fain have incited him to take an interest in public affairs worthy of his princely rank. Further, he disregarded the last solemn command of his father to carry on vigorously the Scotch war; and a useless march into Scotland [1] was the sole outcome of the splendid preparations of his heroic predecessor. Finally, he began a course which ultimately proved fatal, by calling to his side a favourite whom his wise father had banished as a source of disaster to the country and danger to the crown.[2]

The Barons and the Favourite.—The new-comer was a Gascon called Piers Gaveston. He had been brought up as the king's companion in boyhood; but his influence had excited the alarm of Edward I., as being far too great to be worthy of the dignity of the prince.

The foolish king loaded his favourite with every possible gift and honour. He bestowed upon him the Earldom of Cornwall (a dignity which had hitherto been borne only by princes of the blood-royal), made him regent of the kingdom when he himself went to France to celebrate his marriage with the Princess Isabella, and outraged his young queen by the extravagant demonstrations of affection with which he greeted the favourite on his return.[3] In this, as in other matters, the purely *personal* considerations of the frivolous sybarite [4] were obstinately pursued, while the really important matters of government were contemptuously thrown aside as unworthy of notice.

This elevation of an alien offended the English barons. Four days after the coronation, they vainly urged the king to dismiss the intruder. "Sire," they said, "send away this foreigner, who has no business in England, and who will certainly bring trouble." The overweening insolence of the favourite[5] added an element of personal hatred to the public indignation, and the nobles once more united against their king.

It seemed as if the noble national policy of Simon de Montfort were now to be repeated. But the lofty patriotism of the past was altogether absent. In its stead, selfish ambition and wounded pride predominated; the barons sought to transfer the power from the king to themselves not to the nation as a whole, and they seem to have forgotten Edward I.'s grand principle that the 'commonalty of the realm' are entitled to a voice in the government of the country.[6] Still, in their opposition to the rule of foreigners and favourites, and in their determined efforts against illegal impositions, they were enthusiastically supported by the people. The Earl of Lancaster, in particular, was hailed as a worthy successor of Sir Simon the Righteous.[7]

Twice, the barons demanded and obtained the banishment of Gaveston; twice, he came back in spite of them. On the first return, the nobles compelled Edward to agree to the appointment of a committee of twenty-one elected barons and prelates. These men were called '*Ordainers*,' and (since the king would not attend to public affairs) were empowered to make '*ordinances*[8] for the good of the realm.'

On his second defiance of the decree of exile, Lancaster pursued the favourite to the north. He surrendered to the Earl of Pembroke at Scarborough,

but was seized by Guy, Earl of Warwick, a nobleman of stern heart and grim countenance, whom he had mortally offended by calling 'the black dog of Ardennes.' He was carried off to Warwick Castle, where Lancaster and other nobles condemned him to death. The miserable man begged hard for his life; but wounded vanity and outraged pride know no forgiveness, and he was cruelly executed. The indignant king never forgot the death of his friend, and never forgave his executioners.

For some time the country was divided into two great camps, the Earl of Lancaster treating with the king on terms of equality; the influence of the Church, however, prevented a civil war, and brought about a temporary reconciliation between the two parties. The king recognised the *Ordinances* as the law of the land; and, in return, the Parliament granted liberal supplies. The birth of an heir to the throne made all inclined to forget the errors of the past and look forward hopefully to the future.

Conclusion of the Scottish War of Independence.—Meanwhile the affairs of Scotland had been almost altogether neglected. Castle after castle had yielded to Bruce; till at last, in 1314, the only fortress left in the hands of Edward's soldiers was Stirling Castle, and the governor of that stronghold agreed to surrender if not relieved by the day of St. John the Baptist.[9]

Edward, with a little more energy than he had yet shown in public duty, determined to go in person to its relief. Lancaster and his supporters held aloof, but they allowed their retainers to follow the king. A splendid force of 100,000 men crossed the border, and approached Stirling on the evening before the appointed day.

Now the English soldiers had no confidence in their

BRUCE AT BANNOCKBURN.

untried leader; while the smaller Scottish army had per-

fect faith in the veteran warrior who commanded them, and were strongly posted so as to guard the only road to the beleaguered castle. The result was that the magnificent host of Edward was shamefully routed; and, on the fatal field of *Bannockburn*, England suffered the most disastrous defeat it has ever endured.[10]

The work of Edward I. was thus undone by his weaker son, for this victory insured the independence of Scotland. No English boy should be sorry for this. The proudest boast of every inhabitant of Britain is that 'Britons never shall be slaves;' then as now all felt that 'Freedom is a noble thing,' far more precious than life, and the soldiers of Bruce were determined to throw off the yoke of slavery or die upon the field. The spirit of these men is well shown by the poet Burns in words[11] that should be dear to the heart of every lover of liberty :—

"By oppression's woes and pains!
By our sons in servile chains!
We will drain our dearest veins,
But they *shall* be free!

Lay the proud usurper low!
Tyrants fall in every foe!
Liberty's in every blow!
Let us do or die."

Edward for some time obstinately refused to acknowledge Bruce's title to the Scottish throne; but in 1323, after nine years more of desultory warfare, a truce for thirteen years was agreed upon. This closed the long war of Scottish independence, and after-history proves that it was far better for Britain that the northern land

should remain free until the course of events led to a peaceful union with England.

1. Led by the Earl of Pembroke, for Edward II. had returned to Westminster.
2. Edward I. had seen during his father's reign how intense was the national aversion to foreign influence.
3. He left the queen the moment he saw his favourite, kissing and embracing him. He also gave him the jewels which he had received from his bride's father.
4. **Sybarite**, a pleasure-loving person, so called from the ancient and luxurious Grecian city of Sybaris in South Italy.
5. He showered nicknames, such as 'The Great Hog,' 'The Stage-player,' 'The Old Boar,' &c., upon the great nobles.
6. See pages 67 and 68.
7. On the first banishment, the king, in defiance of the barons, actually made him Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland with special powers.
8. The **Ordinances** were published in 1311. The chief were—(1) to remove the abuses in the administration of justice; (2) that customs duties were illegal; (3) that no war was to be declared, nor officer of state appointed, without consent of parliament; (4) that favourites were to be punished and dismissed.
9. June 24.
10. Edward, who was no coward, would fain have made one more effort, but was hurried from the field by the Earl of Suffolk. He fled to Dunbar, and thence sailed to Berwick.
11. The poem is called "Bruce's Address to his men at Bannockburn."

A KING DEPOSED FROM THE THRONE.

THE King again in the hands of Favourites.—After the defeat at Bannockburn, Edward stood before his people as a disgraced man. Previously, his indifference to duty had left them exposed to oppression and misgovernment at home; now, his incompetence had humbled England in the eyes of her enemies, and had undone the glorious work of his father. Encouraged by this loss of prestige, Ireland and Wales rose in rebellion; and it required a long and deadly struggle to reconquer these countries.[1] To add to the general discontent, famine and plague devastated the land.

Parliament insisted that the Earl of Lancaster[2] should be made chief minister with almost absolute power. But this nobleman had no loftier inspiring motive than personal ambition, and was without any statesmanlike ability. Accordingly, it became evident that even Edward himself could not govern worse than his cousin[3]

and rival, and many of the barons separated themselves from the uncrowned despot.

Edward might now have resumed power by the aid of his nobles and with general consent. But untaught by the lessons of the past, this weak trifler once more yielded himself to the control of favourites. This time, he had bestowed his regard upon two Englishmen, a father and son called Despenser. The avarice and greed of the elder, with the inflated pride of the younger, exasperated the barons, and parliament passed against them a sentence of banishment.

Dissension, however, soon broke out among the nobles; and Edward was able to recall his favourites, and even to defeat Lancaster in the battle of *Boroughbridge*.[4] The earl himself was taken captive; and, within a week, was tried, condemned, and put to death. This unhappy execution of a royal prince was the beginning of much after-bloodshed and misery: the 'Wars of the Roses,' the insurrections of the reign of Henry VII., the political executions in the reigns of the first two Tudors,—all may be traced back to this one act of revenge.

Edward and the Despensers were now supreme. He used his victory rather as a triumphant partisan than a wise king: some of the enemies of his favourites were put to death; others were imprisoned; and many fled to France, there to plot against their banishers and wait for the opportunity of revenge.

Fall of the King.—The king's triumph was short-lived. The people, who regarded the dead Lancaster as a martyr to the cause of freedom, joined the followers of that earl in pursuing with relentless hate those whom they regarded as his murderers. Further, the king's

selfish, half-contemptuous neglect of public duty had alienated all the truly worthy and patriotic portion of his subjects, who would so gladly have rallied round the son of the great Plantagenet.

The blow which overthrew the unhappy prince came from those of his own family. The queen had been, as we have said, offended at the very beginning of the reign by the king's preference for Gaveston; and repeatedly since the death of that adventurer, her dignity had been wounded by the honour shown to favourites of low birth. At this juncture, she was sent to France to arrange certain difficulties with her brother.[5] She was there joined by the young Prince of Wales, refused to return to England, and made common cause with the numerous exiles in France.

In September 1326, the queen landed with a considerable force at the mouth of the Orwell,[6] proclaiming herself the avenger of Lancaster and the enemy of the favourites. Edward found himself completely deserted—the people despised and detested him, his Parliament would do nothing for him, and his barons refused to follow his banner. Not a sword was drawn, nor a bow bent, on his behalf. Barons, prelates, commons—even his own brothers—joined his enemies. Driven from London, he took refuge first in the West of England and then in Wales. The elder Despenser was hanged at Bristol, and the younger at Hereford; while the king himself was taken prisoner, and detained in close captivity.

The next act in this drama followed very quickly. A charge of having broken his coronation oath was brought against the unhappy king; and, confessing his unfitness to reign, he resigned the crown. Parliament then

solemnly renounced its allegiance to the fallen monarch, and appointed his son in his stead.

Much obscurity hangs over the fate of the deposed Edward. For eight months he dragged out a miserable life—insult, contumely, and brutal harshness formed his daily lot; and, at last, his enemies [7] determined upon his

death. He had been hurried from prison to prison, and the deed of blood took place in Berkeley Castle.[8] One terrible night, fearful shrieks broke upon the startled air, and were then followed by a silence still more full of horror. Next morning, the death of the ill-starred Edward was announced, and the country people were admitted to see the body of the murdered Plantagenet.

A cold thrill ran through the trembling spectators as they looked upon the convulsed frame and distorted features of him who for twenty years had been their king.

Thus, *for the first time in the history of England, its monarch was deposed*, and, as it were, condemned to death by the voice of the people. While the constitutional importance of this fact is very great, the manner of the deed is disgraceful to all concerned. The faithless wife and her baser minion [9] were unworthy weapons with which to execute a nation's sentence; and to leave a deposed and helpless king in the hands of his bitterest foes (persons as unworthy as himself), exposed to humiliating insult and barbarous outrage, was far more cruel than a deliberate decree of death.

In short, one leaves this reign with a feeling of dreary disappointment. The king was quite unfit for the throne, but his enemies were not one whit more noble. God so ruled it that, even under the weakest of the Plantagenets, the people made steady progress; but the history, instead of being ennobling, is 'like sweet bells jangled, out of tune and harsh,' not one of the leaders stands out before us as a great-hearted patriot, of not one can we say that he was not passion's slave,' not one is worthy to be worn in the nation's 'heart of heart.' [10]

Importance of the Reign.—We cannot quit this time of confusion and shame without looking back upon it, and pondering on its value in England's history.

This period is, in the first place, full of lessons of tragic interest. In no portion of her annals do we see more clearly the dreadful effects of human passion

unrestrained by principle and reason. Obstinate indolence deaf to every warning, natural affection turned to hatred, honour a bye-word, loyalty a lie, revenge a religion—these and other perversions of that 'piece of work' called man, make a chaos of what might have been an ordered world. The fate of Edward declares to all that the worst crime of a sovereign is forgetfulness of his kingly office: for that leaves his people at the mercy of every petty official; and compels them, sooner or later, to sweep from their path one who will not govern and is too indolent to protect them.

In the second place, this reign is important as the close of an epoch [11]—a transition time connecting two widely-different periods of the country's history. On the one hand, it completes the work of Runnymede, of Simon de Montfort, and of those who resisted Edward I.; on the other, it directly points forward to the Wars of the Roses and the establishment of the Tudor dynasty: it sees the end of the long Scottish War and of the great Edward's scheme of national unity; and introduces us to a century's bitter war with France, and a renewal of the vain dream of an Anglo-French empire.

Finally, the reign of the weakest of the Plantagenets, like that of John the vilest of the dynasty, left to the nation a legacy of great constitutional importance. The grand central principle, that the *people* as a whole are entitled to a voice in the government of the nation, was repeatedly proclaimed. In his coronation oath, the king swore to keep the laws '*which the commonalty of the realm shall have chosen;*'[12] and at his deposition, the renunciation of allegiance was made 'IN THE NAME OF ALL MEN OF THE LAND OF ENGLAND.'

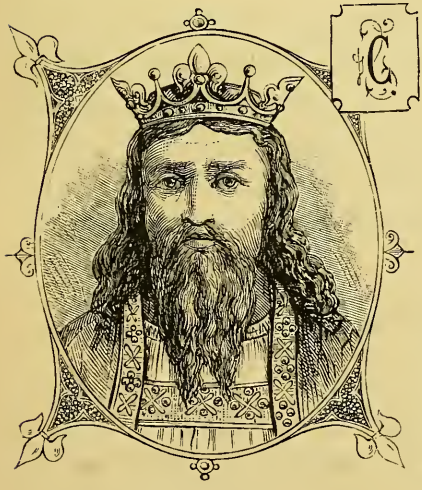
In many other ways, this reign bore fruits of lasting

benefit to England. However vile men may be, yet God's plan steadily unfolds itself, and is always the wisest and best:—

> "Whatever *is*, is right; though purblind[13] man
> Sees but part of the chain, the nearest links—
> His eye not carrying to the equal hand
> That poises all above."

1. Wales required one year of constant fighting; Ireland, three.
2. As Lancaster had not joined in the war, he had not shared in the disgrace of the defeat at Bannockburn.
3. Lancaster was cousin of the king and uncle of the queen.
4. **Boroughbridge**, on the banks of the Ure, in Yorkshire.
5. Edward ought to have gone himself, but to please the Despensers he sent his wife and son instead.
6. In Suffolk.
7. The queen and her favourite Mortimer.
8. **Berkeley Castle**, in Gloucestershire, on the Severn.
9. **Minion.** Originally this word meant a *dear* or loved one, then came to mean a base favourite.
10. These quotations are from Shakespeare's "Hamlet."
11. **Epoch**—that is, the period in which our constitution was formed.
12. This clause was probably for the first time used in the coronation oath.
13. **Purblind**, dim- or near- sighted.

EDWARD III.—THE AGE OF CHIVALRY. 1327–1377.



EDWARD III.

CHARACTER of the Reign.—The new king was but fifteen years of age;[1] and, although his reign had opened so gloomily, it was destined to be one of the most illustrious in the annals of England. In it were won some of the most brilliant victories in *war;* while, in the arts of *peace*, literature, architecture and commerce reached a higher point than they had yet attained. It was followed by a dismal

period of civil war and misery, so that it stands out as the climax of the earlier civilisation of England.

To understand this reign aright, we must remember that since the Conquest the character of feudalism had been gradually changing. The strict ties[2] which formerly bound the vassal to his lord, had been supplanted by the freer and more attractive relations of *Chivalry:* in these, all knights were equal; and all alike were bound by their vow to be true to their religion, to preserve their honour, and to defend the weaker sex from insult or injury. Such sentiments had been fostered by the songs of the Troubadours, the stories and romances of the Trouvères,[3] and the stirring pages of the Chroniclers. In a word, it was in this age that *Chivalry* had its highest development; and our hearts glow within us as we gaze upon the glittering pageantry of the period, amid which "the din of arms, the shouting of knights, and the marshalling of troops" are ever and anon heard.

Comparing, however, the chivalry of this period with the martial enthusiasm of the earlier reigns, one detects, amid much that is truly noble, a slightly theatrical element which somewhat lessens our admiration. Placing, for example, the 'chivalrous' Edward side by side with the feudal Henry[4] or Richard, one cannot help saying to one's self—

> "So all that the old dukes had been, without knowing it,
> This duke would fain know he was, without being it."

The Edward of the great French war was essentially a *knight-errant.* Thus he was personally daring, delighted in dangerous adventure, and won splendid victories; but, on the other hand, he was without the

foresight of a great general or statesman, and reaped no permanent benefit from the matchless prowess of his armies.

The King a Minor.—As Edward was under age, a council of regency was appointed to govern during his minority. The chief power, however, was left in the hands of the queen, who unhappily surrendered herself more and more to the influence of Mortimer. After a feeble pretence of reforming the abuses of the late reign, the favourite threw off the mask and acted with insolent presumption. He thus offended the barons and excited the dislike of the mass of the people. At the same time, his dishonourable intimacy with the queen roused the indignation of all the good within the realm.

Meanwhile, the Scots had invaded the north of England; and the young Edward, with eager enthusiasm, joined the army sent to oppose them. To his disappointment, he found that it was impossible to bring the foe to bay.

Every soldier in the Scottish army was mounted on a hardy steed, which could endure great fatigue with little provender. The invaders, in fact, had no baggage to encumber them; for a bag of meal, carried in front of each horseman, supplied all the food they required. Such a force could, of course, move with the greatest rapidity from place to place.

On only two occasions did the armies confront one another. On the first of these, Edward found the Scots strongly posted upon a hill on the opposite side of the river Wear. Like a knight-errant rather than a general, he challenged them to cross the stream and fight the battle on the level plain. Their leader, the famous Douglas, wisely answered, "I have not come

here to please King Edward, and I shall not leave my post for love of him."

The second time the armies met, the young king narrowly escaped capture. The two forces lay watching one another for eighteen days. Then when darkness covered the scene and Edward's soldiers had retired to rest, they were roused by the clash of arms and the wild battle-cry "A Douglas! A Douglas!" While all

DOUGLAS AND THE PRINCE.

was yet in confusion, the curtains of the royal tent were rudely drawn back and the tall form of the 'Black Douglas' towered menacingly over the couch where the young king lay. The royal chamberlain and the chaplain rushed forward to meet the intruder, and persuaded him to withdraw.

In such scenes as these, Edward's love of adventure was at once gratified and increased. Peace was shortly

afterwards made with the Scots; and this still further incensed many of the barons against Mortimer.

As Edward advanced to manhood, he began to understand the fate of his father, and to feel deeply the disgrace of Mortimer's relation to the queen. Further, in 1328, he had married Philippa of Hainault;[6] and, two years later, a son was born to him, who was afterwards to become so renowned as the Black Prince. He felt that he was now able to discharge the duties of his office, and he determined to throw off the dishonourable yoke under which he laboured.

Calling a parliament at Nottingham, where Isabella was staying, he suddenly seized the favourite in the very presence of the guilty queen, who vainly entreated her dear son to spare her 'gentle cousin.' Mortimer, brought to trial for the murder of the late king, was quickly condemned and executed; the queen, however, was treated courteously, but was removed from public life and confined to the castle of Risings.[7]

Edward then quietly assumed the reins of government, and acted with a prudence and moderation which commended him to the great body of his people.

Renewal of the Scottish War.—In the year 1332, Edward Baliol, the son of John Baliol, determined to assert his claim to the Scottish throne; he was encouraged by Edward, and supported by many barons who, for opposing Bruce, had been deprived of their Scottish estates. Setting out from Ravenspur in Yorkshire, the expedition sailed to the Tay; and, in seven weeks, Baliol was crowned at Scone. He was almost as quickly defeated, for within three months he was driven from the country.

Edward now made a formal league with this enemy

of the Bruce dynasty, and with a great army laid siege to Berwick. A Scottish host, led by Douglas, advanced to the relief of that important town;[8] and there was then fought the first of the great battles of this reign—one which closely resembled many of the more famous contests which followed.

King Edward had posted his army in a strong position on *Halidon Hill*, where a deep marsh protected his front. The Scottish knights, foolishly hurrying forward to attack their foes, were thrown into disorder in the morass, and shot down in great numbers by the English archers "who made their arrows flee as thick as motes in the sunbeams." The defeat of Bannockburn was thus avenged; for the Scottish leader, with the flower of the nobility of Scotland and 30,000 men-at-arms, fell upon the field.

Baliol was once more placed upon the throne, and the young King David Bruce took refuge in France. From this time onwards, the Scots and the French were close allies in all the wars with England. While Edward could help him, Baliol's position remained secure; but when French affairs called the English king away, the Scots rose in rebellion and expelled him from the kingdom.

The Scottish war went on for fourteen years. After the victory of Creçy, the young King David led an army into Cumberland and Durham, but was totally defeated and taken prisoner in the disastrous battle of *Neville's Cross*.[9]

Nine years later, when the English king was renewing his war with France, the Scots again crossed the border. Edward determined to teach these unwearied enemies a lesson. Entering their country, he deliberately

destroyed every building and laid waste the land for twenty miles from the coast. This dreadful devastation was long remembered by the Scots, and in after-invasions of England they often called upon one another to remember the 'Burnt Candlemas.'[10] Even this could not subdue the spirit of his foes; for when famine compelled him to retreat, they hung upon the rear of his army and kept up an incessant and harassing attack.

David Bruce was shortly afterwards released from captivity; and, in 1357, a peace was made with the Scots, recognising, once more, the independence of their country. This struggle is one of great interest, for it was in it that Edward and his soldiers were trained for the longer contest which now awaited them.

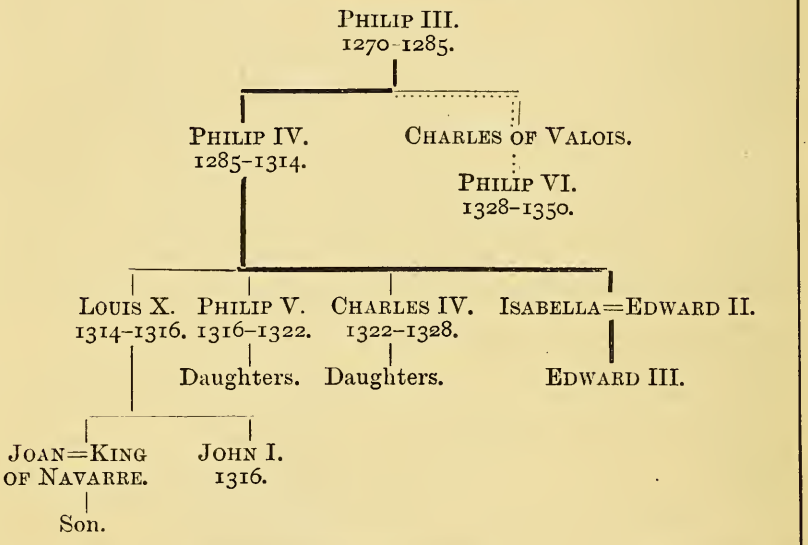
1. Edward was born in 1312.
2. That is, of service on the part of the vassal and protection on the part of the lord.
3. Troubadours and Trouvères, see note 3, page 33.
4. Henry II.
5. From Browning's dramatic lyric, "The Flight of the Duchess."
6. Hainault, now a province of Belgium.
7. **Risings**, now Castle Rising, in Norfolk, five miles N.W. of Lynn.
8. In 1833. Berwick was called the 'key of Scotland.'
9. In the county of Durham. The battle was fought on October 17th, 1346.
10. 2nd February 1355.

BEGINNING OF THE HUNDRED YEARS' WAR WITH FRANCE.[1]

Edward's Claim to the Throne of France.—In the year 1328, a new king[2] had ascended the throne of France; and Edward, acknowledging his title to the crown, had done homage for Guienne and Gascony, which the Kings of England still held. There had been disputes concerning the possession of certain towns in the former province, and the ill-feeling was now intensified by the alliance between Scotland and France. It became clear that war was inevitable; and Edward, with the consent of his parliament, boldly put forward a

claim to the French throne. The ground of this proceeding will be evident from the following table :—

TABLE SHOWING THE CLAIM OF EDWARD III. TO THE THRONE OF FRANCE.



On the death of John I., the infant son of Louis X., the French Estates[3] had declared that by the Salic law[4] females were excluded from the throne. The next two kings had both left daughters who had been passed over; and, in accordance with the same law, Philip VI. had been called to the crown. Edward III. now maintained that, although a female could not reign in France, yet her son ought to inherit. This was an absurd claim; for the daughters of Louis X., Philip V., and Charles IV. had borne sons[5] who would have ranked before Edward III., and no person can hand down a right they never possessed. It was this sad dispute which led to a whole century of strife between France and England,

and gave birth to a hostile feeling between the two nations which lasted till quite recent times.

Character of the War.—In turning over the pages of the Chronicles giving an account of this war, one is first struck by the noble and picturesque side of chivalry. Deeds of heroic bravery ; the conqueror constantly waiting on the vanquished ;[6] the prisoner who had been liberated to obtain his ransom returning to captivity rather than break his word,[7]—these, and acts such as these, kindle the imagination and elevate the thoughts of the reader.

But there is a gloomy side to the picture. The laws of chivalry bade knight be courteous to belted knight, but they said nothing about the masses of the people; and this long war was one scene of cruelty and suffering to the wretched inhabitants of the devastated land.

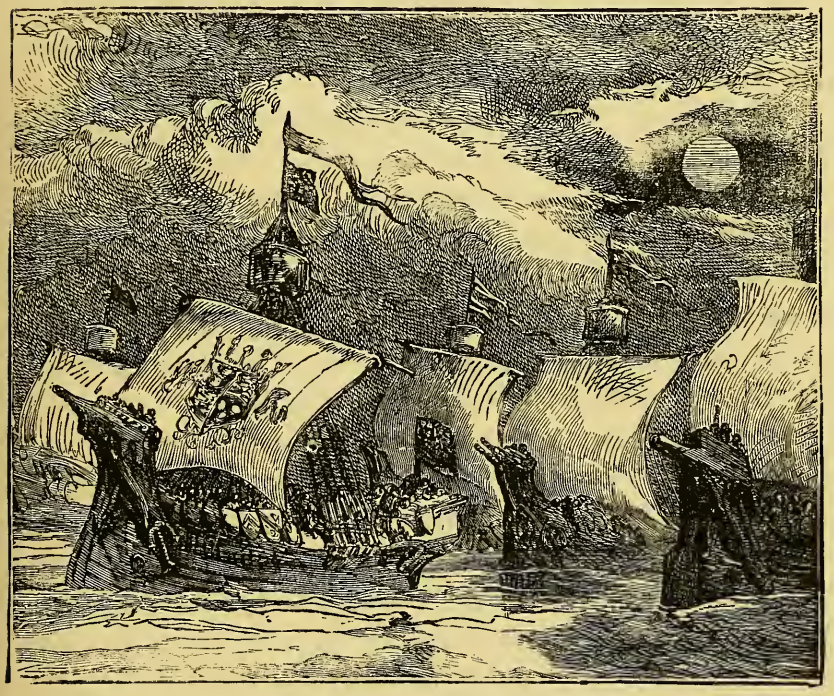
At first, Edward relied upon the help of allies ; but soon found that he could not safely depend upon such aid. It was accordingly with the help of his English soldiers alone that he gained the victories which render illustrious this page of our history. The different races which united to form our nation had now thoroughly mingled, and the language spoken was in all essential characteristics our English tongue. We read of baron and burgess, knight and citizen, but we no longer hear of the quarrels between Norman and Saxon ; and the chief poet of the reign is known as the "well of English undefiled."[8]

It was proved in these wars that a people had sprung up on the banks of the Thames worthy to be ranked as the foremost race of all the world.[9] The poet Shakespeare makes a later king[10] thus describe the men of Old England :—

"On, on you noblest English,
Whose blood is fetched from fathers of war-proof!
Fathers, that, like so many Alexanders,
Have, in these parts, from morn till even fought,
And sheathed their swords for lack of argument.
Be copy now to men of grosser blood,
And teach them how to war! And, you, good yeomen,
Whose limbs were made in England, show us here
The mettle of your pasture; let us swear
That you are worthy of your breeding, which I doubt not,
For there is none of you so mean and base
That hath not noble lustre in your eyes."

The army of England had gradually become one of paid and trained men,[11] and the leaders were now mostly professional soldiers skilled in the art of war. Further, Edward III. had learned a great deal from the wars of Wallace and Bruce as well as from his own contest with the Scots. The former of these leaders had proved the value of solid bodies of infantry, the latter had shown how helpless heavy cavalry were where the ground was difficult, and Edward's own wars had demonstrated the unsurpassed skill of the English archers. The French army, on the other hand, was still a feudal one, led by great lords rather than by men used to war and relying mainly upon its steel-clad knights. Such a force was quite unable to meet the troops of Edward, and France was all but annexed to England. Three things, however, worked together to save that country from an English conquest—the fact that Edward was a brave knight-errant rather than a statesman, the resistless *national* spirit of the French people, and the religious fervour afterwards called forth by the heroic Joan of Arc.

Edward and his Allies: The Battle of Sluys.— Edward made many alliances with the rulers in the north-east of France. His claim was especially supported by the citizens of Flanders, who had driven out their tyrannical Count. These Flemings were the great cloth-weavers of Europe, and eagerly desired the monopoly of the English wool-trade.[12] Accordingly, it was to Flanders



THE ENGLISH FLEET APPROACHING SLUYS.

that Edward first led an army. He was received gladly, but his preparations came to nothing. He found his other allies utterly unstable; and the French king, not risking a great battle, allowed him to waste his strength upon isolated fortresses.

Edward was bitterly disappointed, and returned to

England in 1340. His parliament encouraged him to renewed efforts, and granted him liberal supplies in a novel form—giving him 'the *ninth* lamb, the *ninth* fleece, and the *ninth* sheaf.'

Meanwhile, Philip of France had, in his rival's absence, invaded Flanders; and, with the help of many Genoese ships, he prepared to prevent Edward from landing again in the country. The two fleets met on the 24th of June 1340, and the English sailors soon proved their superiority.

The French vessels were arranged in three lines after the model of a land army, and were chained together. This, of course, rendered them quite unmanageable. Accordingly, the English ships got to the windward, and dashed down upon the closely-packed mass. So great was the confusion that many French and Genoese sailors leaped in terror into the sea. The slaughter was enormous,[13] and Edward sailed to Flanders in triumph.

In spite of this great victory, the campaign that followed was a barren one. A short truce was accordingly made; and Edward returned to England to inquire into the state of the finances, as his supplies had fallen short of his needs. While thus trying to clear himself from his difficulties, he was completely deserted by all his allies but Flanders, and found it advisable to agree to a cessation of hostilities for three-and-a-half years.

During this 'breathing space,' the Pope, who was at this time regarded as the general arbiter in disputes among the Christian peoples of Europe, offered to mediate in the interests of peace. At first, the rivals agreed to submit their claims to the Pontiff; but it soon became evident that the two nations would not abide by the judge's decision and that a renewal of the war was unavoidable.

1. The war may be said to have lasted from 1337 to the beginning of the Wars of the Roses in 1453.
2. Philip VI.
3. **Estates**, equivalent to the English Parliament.
4. **Salic Law**, the law of the *Salian Franks*. The Franks, or freemen, were a group of German tribes who settled in France. We can distinguish two principal tribes; one of these was the Salian Franks, who settled in the district between the Meuse, the sea, and the Somme, and founded the royal dynasty of France. The Salic law was that "no portion of land in the full ownership of the head of the family should pass into the possession of women."
5. To get over this difficulty, Edward absurdly contended that sons of daughters to succeed must have been born during the lifetime of their grandfather.
6. *E.g.*, the Black Prince and King John after the battle of Poitiers.
7. King John after the Treaty of Bretigny.
8. The poet Spenser thus speaks of the earlier poet, Chaucer:—

   "Dan Chaucer, well of English undefiled,
   On fame's eternal bead-roll worthy to be filed."

9. See Macaulay's "History of England," vol. i.
10. Henry V. at the siege of Harfleur.
11. Like our modern 'regulars.' The policy of employing mercenaries had been introduced by the great Henry II. See page 17.
12. It is very interesting to find that England, which now depends upon her manufactures, then actually exported her wool and other produce.
13. The French lost 328 ships and 30,000 men! It is said that all his courtiers were afraid to tell Philip of the disaster; and that at last the court jester revealed it to him by saying, "What cowards these English are! *They* would not leap into the sea at Sluys as the French and Genoese did."

CREÇY AND CALAIS.

THE March to Creçy.—The war recommenced in Gascony, where the English were at first hard pressed; and, to divert the attention of the French, a great army was landed at La Hogue in Normandy. Edward's design was to march through the north of France towards Flanders, where he expected to be reinforced by a large army of Flemings.

The invaders encountered their first serious difficulty at the river Seine. Here they found that all the bridges had been broken down; while Philip, with a strong force, held the opposite bank ready to oppose their passage. At the same time, a large army was hurrying from the south of France to attack them in the rear. It was absolutely necessary to cross the river, but it was impossible to do so in the face of so strong an enemy; to retreat was almost as hopeless, and destruction seemed inevitable.

Edward, however, directed a rapid march to be made

towards Paris; this caused the greatest alarm in that city, and forced Philip to hurry up the river for the defence of his capital. There was thus left unguarded a broken bridge at Poissy.[1] This the English rapidly repaired, and as quickly used to free themselves from their dangerous position. The small but brave army had thus surmounted the first obstacle in their path, and advanced safely on their way.

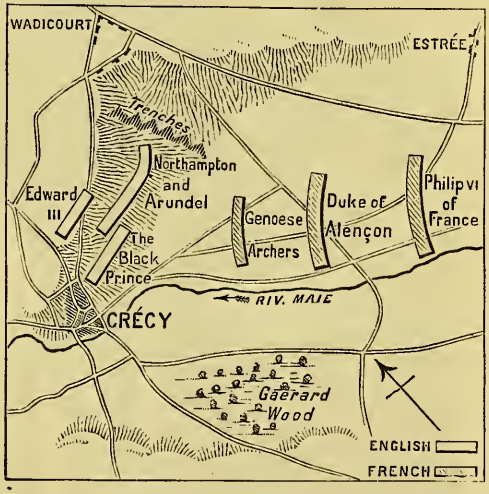
But one more river, the *Somme*, lay between Edward and the north-eastern frontier towards which he was marching; and when he reached its banks he found himself again brought to a standstill. All the fords were strongly guarded, the exasperated army of the baffled king of France was hurrying in pursuit, and once more it seemed impossible for the English force to escape. But, at the last moment, a peasant pointed out a ford below *Abbeville*, where the river could be safely crossed at low water. To this, the retreating army hurried; and, after a severe struggle, found themselves again in comparative safety.

The rising tide prevented the pursuers from at once following, and the wise Edward used well the respite in resting his wearied soldiers and fixing upon a strong position for the coming battle.

The Battle of Crecy: 1346.—The English king, who had not forgotten the lessons of his Scottish wars, marshalled his army near the town of *Crecy*.[2] A hill, which commanded the whole of the field of battle, stood in the rear; and on it the skilful leader took his stand. He arranged his troops in three divisions—the first led by the Prince of Wales, the second by the Earls of Northampton and Arundel, while the third remained in reserve near himself. Deep trenches were dug to

protect the flanks of the little army; and, above all, each captain was told exactly the duty required of him. Finally, Edward directed that "all men should eat at their ease and drink a draught, sitting on the ground with their helmets off and their crossbows in front of them," so as to be "more fresh and better prepared."

Meanwhile, the French army was hurrying towards the field—the men being footsore and weary, exhausted by the heat of the day [3] and the rapidity of their advance. They, too, were in three divisions, as will be seen from the accompanying plan of the battle. The van of their army was composed of about fifteen thousand Genoese crossbowmen. These men had marched six leagues since daybreak, and had much need of rest before they could be fit for fighting.



"The same season there fell a great rain and an eclipse, with a terrible thunder; and before the rain, there came flying over the battle a great number of crows for fear of the tempest coming. Then anon the air began to wax clear, and the sun to shine fair and bright, the which was right in the Frenchmen's eyen [4] and on the Englishmen's backs.

"When the Genoese were assembled together, and began to approach, they made a great leap and cry to abash the Englishmen; but they stood still, and stirred not for all that. Then the Genoese again the second

time made another leap and a fell cry, and stepped for-

EDWARD CONGRATULATING THE BLACK PRINCE ON HIS BRAVERY AT CRECY.

ward a little; and the Englishmen removed not one foot. Thirdly again, they leaped and cried, and went forth till they came within shot; then they shot fiercely with their crossbows.

"Then the English archers stepped forth one pace, and let fly their arrows so wholly and thick that it seemed snow. When the Genoese felt the arrows piercing through heads and arms and breasts, many of them cast down their crossbows, and did cut their strings, and returned discomfited."[5]

Thus began the first of a series of battles, in all of which the English archers decided the fortunes of the day. The magnificent French cavalry, under Alençon, vainly strove to check the flight of the Genoese, and were at last ordered to cut their way through the mass of fugitives in order to close with the battalion of the Black Prince. The English archers[6] allowed them to pass through their ranks; but, while they were locked in deadly combat with the Prince's men-at-arms, the bold yeomen closed up to prevent support from reaching the enemy, and rained their deadly arrows upon the third line of the French.

At one time it seemed as if the overpowering numbers of Alençon's cavalry would crush their brave opponents. Reinforcements were eagerly asked for from the English king, but that knight-errant refused to send a single man while his son lived. "Let the youth,"[7] he cried, "win his spurs; for I intend, if it please God, that this day be his."

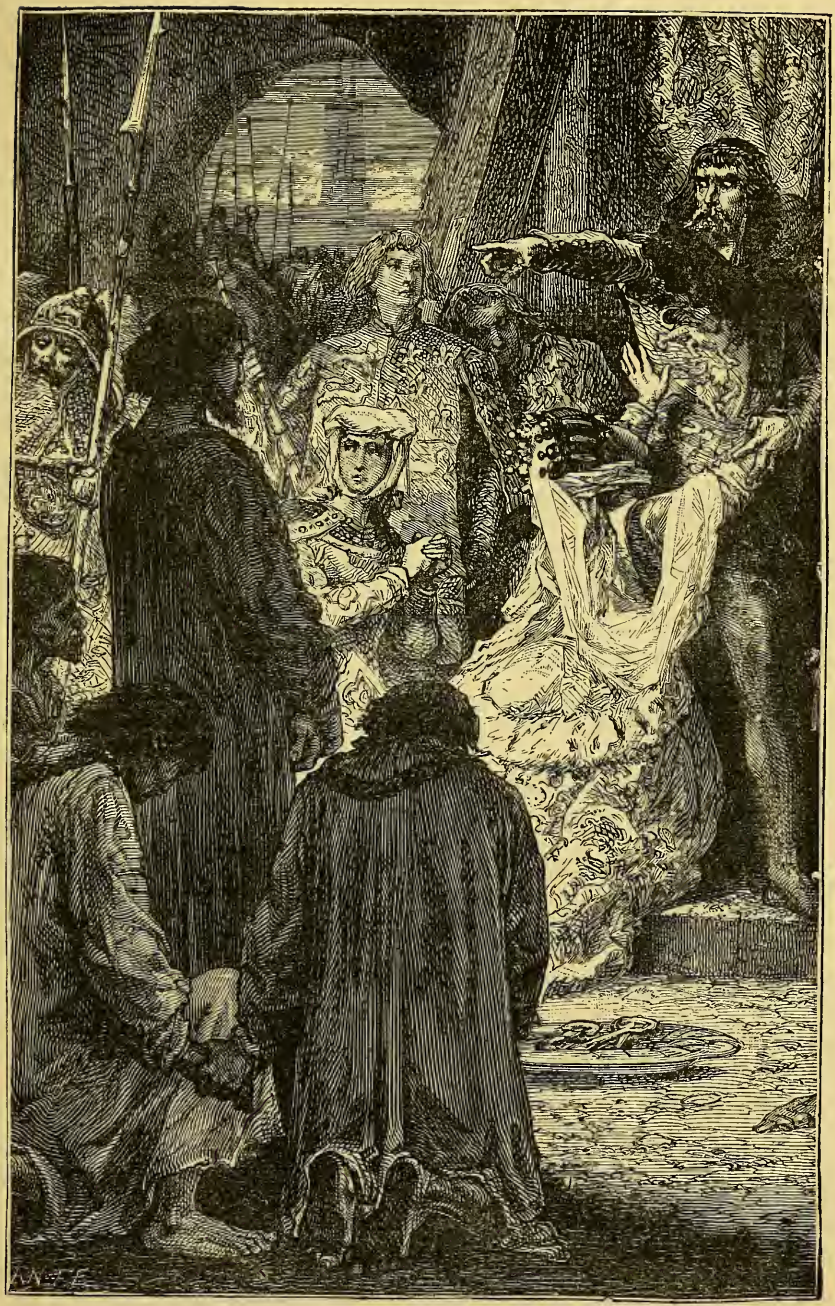
His confidence was justified, for his gallant son was at last victorious, and the cavalry opposed to him gave way in wild confusion. As evening closed over the scene of slaughter, a few straggling bands of heroic

knights strove to retrieve the fortunes of France, but at the hour of vespers the French king, seeing that all was lost, withdrew from the field and fled towards Amiens.[8]

The Siege of Calais.—Although the victory was complete and the English had slain far more than their own numbers, Edward's army was too small to follow up the advantage, and continued their march towards the frontier. Anxious to have possession of a port near both to England and to his Flemish allies, Edward now advanced upon the strong town of Calais.[9]

To his rage, the victorious king found the task more difficult than he had anticipated, for the siege occupied him nearly a year. The delay but made the fiery Plantagenet more determined, and kindled his anger. In vain King Philip unfurled the Oriflamme,[10] and summoned all France to rally round the sacred flag; in vain attack after attack was made upon the English lines; the blockade became more and more strict, and at last hunger forced the brave defenders to yield themselves to the mercy of their conqueror.

At first, Edward declared that he would put the whole of the inhabitants to the sword. It was only upon the remonstrances of his captains that he relented, and agreed to spare the rest if six of the principal inhabitants would come forward to die for their fellows. On the appointed day Eustace de St. Pierre and five brave burgesses appeared, "bare-headed, bare-footed, with halters round their necks, and bearing the keys of the city in their hands." All were affected at the sad sight—even the soldiers wept; but Edward remained firm, "for he hated those of Calais for the great damage and checks which they had caused to his ships in bygone times." The



EDWARD AND THE CITIZENS OF CALAIS.

noble Queen Philippa at last threw herself at the feet of the stern king, and by her gentle pleading induced her husband to spare the unfortunate citizens.

A truce, at first made for a few months, was afterwards renewed from time to time; and finally a dreadful plague, which at this time devastated Europe, led to a long cessation of hostilities.

1. **Poissy**, on the Seine, a few miles below Paris.
2. **Creçy**, in Picardy, 50 miles south of Calais.
3. The battle was fought on the 26th of August 1346.
4. **Eyen**, eyes.
5. This extract is from Lord Berners's translation of Froissart's Chronicles.
6. The English archers were placed in front of the army, in a kind of harrow-shaped formation.
7. The Prince of Wales was born in 1330.
8. The loss of the French in this battle was enormous: 11 princes, 1200 knights, and 30,000 of inferior rank were killed. Among the slain was the blind King of Bohemia, from whose standard, according to the story, the crest of the Prince of Wales was taken.
9. Calais remained in the hands of the English continuously from 1347 to 1558.
10. **Oriflamme** (from the Latin *auriflamma*, a golden flame) was the royal banner of France. It was sacred to St. Denis, the patron saint of France, and its presence was regarded as a presage of victory. It was of red silk, embroidered with golden lilies and split into three points.

THE PESTILENCE—RENEWAL OF HOSTILITIES.

THE **Black Death.**—This dreadful disease, which began to devastate Europe in the year 1348, commenced its ravages in Asia *and spread over the whole of the known world.* It received its name from black spots which covered the bodies of its victims. Medicine seemed to have no power to avert the doom of those affected by it, for death almost certainly followed within three or four days after the attack.

As to the *cause* of this plague, little is known.[1] Many ascribe the 'Death' to a great convulsion of the earth's surface, which, by destroying myriads of animals and plants, polluted the atmosphere with the putrid remains. It is said that the poisoned air was visible as it swept onwards in its deadly course; "a dense and awful fog

was seen in the heavens, rising in the East and descending upon Italy."

Whatever may have been the cause of this deadly plague, its *course* can be distinctly traced. From China, it spread slowly eastward till it reached the Mediterranean and the Black Sea; next, it swept down upon Constantinople and the great cities of Italy,[2] and from these centres it spread its fatal influence over the rest of Europe. In Great Britain, from one-third to one-half of the entire population certainly perished.[3]

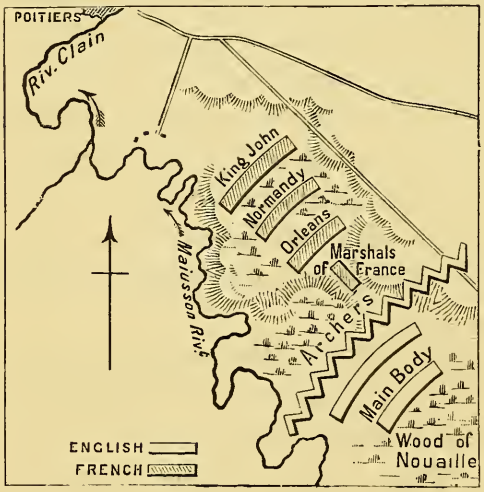
So great a mortality produced very extraordinary *effects*. Many of those attacked were driven, in their despair, to self-slaughter, and thousands, though untouched by the disease, died of fear amid the fearful mortality around them. A maddening sense of guilt and dread of coming punishment drove many others to wander over Europe in bands[4]—lashing themselves with terrible scourges, singing penitential psalms, and warning all that the great day of judgment was at hand.

The Battle of Poitiers: 1356.—War was renewed in 1355, and the Black Prince led an army from Bordeaux right up the Garonne, and across the watershed to the Mediterranean coast. This march reveals to us the worst aspect of the age of 'chivalry.' Five hundred towns and villages were ruthlessly destroyed; and, with brutal indifference, the poor citizens and peasants were left houseless and starving to meet the hardships of the coming winter.

A similar expedition set out in the following year, and carried death and terror into the very heart of France. The invading force had almost reached the river Loire, when the French King cut off their line of retreat near *Poitiers*.[5] So overwhelming was the army

opposed to him, that the Black Prince would gladly have agreed to any honourable terms. But the exulting enemy demanded the immediate surrender of himself and a hundred knights; to this neither he nor his brave soldiers would agree, and so they prepared themselves to fight 'as they were able.'

The English leader showed himself to be as consummate a soldier as his father. He posted his men in such a position that the cavalry of the enemy could not easily attack them. One narrow road, passing through a country cut up into numerous vineyards, alone led up to the English front; and the skilful prince lined the hedges on each side of this path with the sharpshooters of his army.



The archers again won the victory; for, as the first division of the French pressed through the defile, their cloth-yard shafts soon blocked up the narrow pass with dead and wounded—those in front strove to retreat, those in the rear pressed on, and soon the confusion became general. The Black Prince then led an attack against the second body of the enemy, and after a fierce combat made himself master of the field. Meanwhile, a flank attack of English horse had spread a panic through the third battalion of the French, and the battle ended in a final struggle round the person of the king. That monarch, with his youngest son by his side, fought

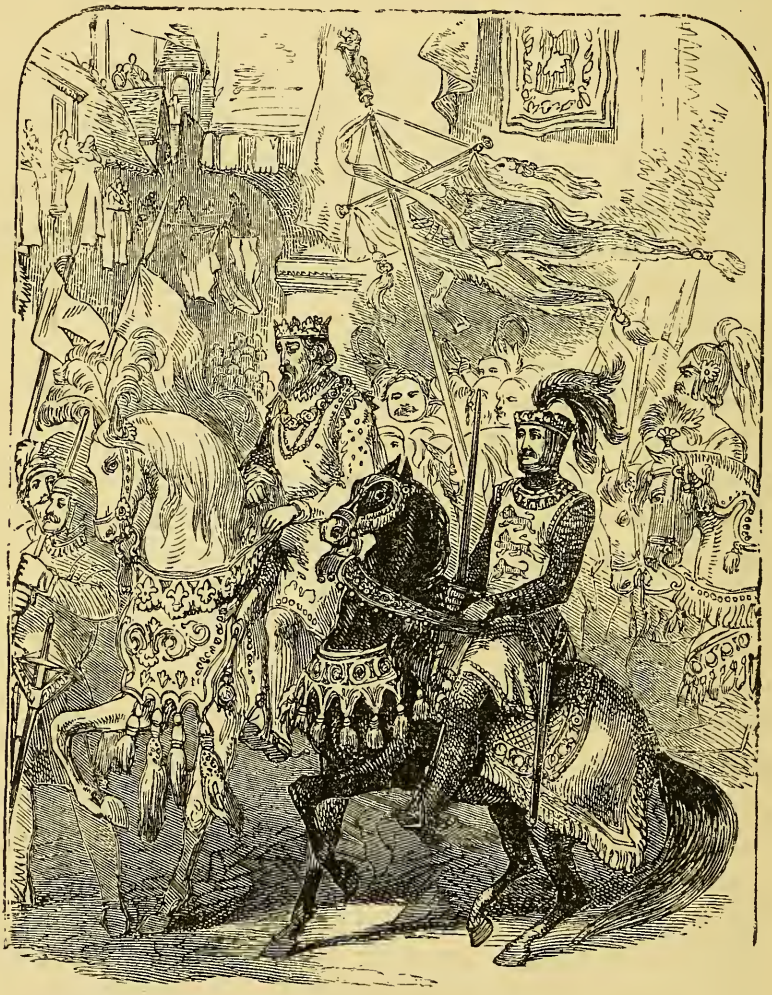
most bravely. His boy seemed to keep his anxious eye in constant motion: "Guard the right, sire!" "Watch the left, sire!" he called out, as each danger threatened the noble king. All was in vain, for both father and son were taken captive.

Just as the cruel expeditions of the Black Prince show the brutal aspect of chivalry, so the capture of King[6] John reveals to us its noble side. The royal prisoner was treated with most refined courtesy, the Prince of Wales waiting upon him as his servant, and saying that he was not worthy to sit down at table with so great a sovereign and so valiant a knight. A few months later, too, when the victorious army entered London, King Edward came forward to meet the vanquished foe[7] as if he were a conqueror rather than a captive; and John rode upon a splendid steed at the head of the procession, while the Black Prince, mounted upon a small black horse, attended like a page by his side.

Little need be said of the concluding battles of this reign. The English won many victories, but never seemed nearer the conquest of the unhappy land. A peace was accordingly agreed to in 1360, by which Edward resigned his claim to the French throne and received the independent sovereignty of certain provinces in the south-west and extreme north-east of France. This treaty[8] was never carried out, for the national spirit of the French was, even in the midst of misery and suffering, resolutely opposed to the dismemberment of their country.

The Black Prince allowed himself to be drawn into a Spanish war, from which he came back, crowned indeed with added glory, but shattered in health and ruined in

fortune. Whenever he took the field, success attended his arms; but he was seldom able again for active service, and had finally to return home. Before his



KING JOHN AND THE BLACK PRINCE ENTERING LONDON.

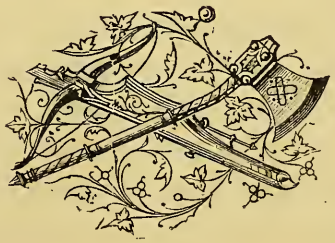
death,[9] England had lost not only her conquests, but her hereditary possessions;[10] and thus the victories of Creçy and Poitiers had only led to a more complete overthrow

than any English king had suffered since the time of John.

Death of the King (1377).—Edward died at Richmond, having lost all the popularity he had gained by the earlier glories of his French wars. He seemed to have become prematurely aged, and surrendered the cares of government to his sons—especially to John of Gaunt, Duke of Lancaster. The doting king had abandoned himself to a life of unworthy pleasure, and yielded completely to the influence of a woman called Alice Perrers, who brought public contempt upon the Crown by interfering with the administration of justice.

The scene of this monarch's death forms a sad commentary upon his life of glory. The wretched old man died deserted even by his servants, who were busied in plundering his palace. Not one kindly hand would have supported his dying head had not a faithful priest knelt praying by his side, leaving him not until he had drawn his last expiring sigh.

1. Arago, the astronomer, suggests that the earth may have passed through the deadly vapour emanating from some comet. Certain fanatics declared that the Jews had poisoned the wells, and thousands of God's ancient people were cruelly slain.
2. This was the age of the great Italian republics—Florence, Genoa, Venice, &c.
3. In Europe 25,000,000 died. Fully one-third of the population of the known world must have been swept away.
4. Called *Flagellants*, or Scourgers.
5. **Poitiers,** in Poitou, 60 miles south of Tours.
6. The Philip of Crecy had died in 1350, and had been succeeded by John.
7. There were now two royal captives in England—John of France and David of Scotland.
8. Called the Treaty of Bretigny, or the Great Peace.
9. The Black Prince died in 1376.
10. Nothing remained but Calais, Bordeaux, Bayonne, and a few less important towns on the Dordogne.



PARLIAMENT AND PEOPLE.

PROGRESS of the House of Commons.—During this long reign of fifty years, some seventy Parliaments had met; and, amid all the glory of foreign victories, in spite of many arbitrary acts of the king, we can trace a steady advance in the influence and power of the Commons.

In previous struggles with the Crown, it was the Baronage who always stood forward as the defenders of the liberties of England,[1] the champions of the national cause, and the enemies of any illegal exercise of power on the part of the king. But with the reign of Edward II. the *Barons* began to play a baser part. They boldly usurped the powers they had formerly opposed in the monarch. It thus became the duty of the *Commons* to resist not only the arbitrary action of the Crown, but the encroachments of the great lords; and, from this time forward, the Lower House appears in our history as the Guardian of the Constitution.

In accordance with this change of relationship between the Peers[2] and the Commons, we find the latter choosing a Speaker[3] in the earlier part of the reign, and beginning to sit in a separate chamber two years later.[4] It will be interesting to notice a few of the more important steps in their advance.[5]

In the first place, they not only confirmed the practice of coupling redress of grievances with grants of money,[6] but *they completely established their right to inquire into abuses of administration.* At the beginning of each Parliament, the great public functionaries were required to resign their offices in order that their conduct

should be examined;[7] and, near the end of the reign, they even more completely vindicated this right by *impeaching*[8] and bringing to punishment certain offending servants of the Crown.

In the second place, advancing beyond the maladministration of ministers, they attacked certain prerogatives claimed by the Crown itself. Hitherto the king had claimed the strange privilege of seizing, while on his journeys, carriages, horses, food, and whatever else he might require. As the crowned spoiler seldom condescended to pay for what he took, and as his immediate attendants and the great lords (each in his own district) dutifully followed the august example of their sovereign, this usage had become a monstrous and intolerable burden to the people. This right of *Purveyance*, as it was called, was now limited to what was required for the king and queen alone; and it was further enacted that payment of smaller sums should be made on the spot, and of larger ones within four months.

A bill of still greater importance was passed in 1351. This was the celebrated *Statute of Treasons*.[9] Up to that time, offences of the most varied kind and degree could by legal ingenuity be included under the dreadful name of treason; and hundreds had suffered forfeiture, imprisonment, and even the penalty of death itself, for comparatively trivial breaches of the law. To prevent such injustice, this great measure distinctly specified the crimes which alone were to be regarded as of this degree; and so great was the feeling of relief, that the assembly which passed this beneficent law has ever since been known as THE BLESSED PARLIAMENT.

These and other changes indicate that the chief power—which had, after the conquest, been held by

the Crown, and had lately been seized by the Barons—was slowly, but surely, passing (with its accompanying duty of defending the liberties of England) into the hands of the representatives of the people.

The Black Plague produced effects still more lasting. The removal of so large a proportion of the inhabitants of Europe shook the whole fabric of society; particularly, it changed the relation between employer and employed. Thousands of farms lay uncultivated, and great industries were brought to a standstill from the scarcity of labour; it followed, as a natural consequence, that the survivors should demand higher remuneration for their services, and should refuse to work at the former rates.

On the other hand, the noble and moneyed classes, who alone were represented in Parliament, would not tolerate so daring an innovation. Accordingly, they passed a series of most oppressive and foolish laws. Thus, in the *Statute of Labourers*,[10] it was enacted that every able-bodied man should serve any one who required him at the old wages; and any employer who paid more was to be fined thrice the sum given. They also retarded the emancipation of the serfs by decreeing that even free labourers should quit neither the parish of their birth nor the occupation of their fathers.

Classes of Society.—Although the House of Commons was even then the most popular assembly in Europe, the great mass of the population had still no voice in the government of the nation. The Commons in Parliament really consisted of but two classes—the Knights of the Shire,[11] who were chosen from the country gentry and were the neighbours and friends of the Barons, and the Burgesses, who were elected by and from the wealthy or merchant section of the citizens

only. Now, beneath these moneyed men, came the great body of the artisan and labouring classes [12]—altogether unrepresented and regarded as politically powerless, but soon to make their voice heard in a terrible manner as they insisted upon their rights. Many of these lower commons were as yet merely serfs,[13] and had never known the blessings of freedom.

Bacon says that we must not mistake the people who make the most noise for the only inhabitants; and it is no less true that those changes in a nation's condition which appear upon the statute book, are not always, by any means, the most important. Now, the *abolition of villenage* [14] in England was a reform of the unnoticed and (as one might say) of the silent kind.

The mighty movement had been in progress during the whole Plantagenet period—unobserved, indeed, amid the more brilliant pageants of the times, but resistless in its slow advance and splendid in its results. As the coral insect is unweariedly at work, unseen and undreamt of, during the many ages that glide past ere its reefs and islands rear their heads above the waves; so the agencies leading to the emancipation of the English serfs are hardly noticed by the student of history, until, lo! as if by the sudden interference of some Genius of the Lamp or Ring [15]—the generous act of some lofty spirit of intelligence and love—a free people, full of courage and sturdy independence, in the truest sense their 'country's pride,' is found living in comfort, where formerly an oppressed multitude of slaves had trembled beneath the tyranny of their frowning taskmaster.

The most potent of the beneficent forces which produced this magnificent result was the maternal *influence of the Church*, undoubtedly the chief civiliser of the

Middle Ages. As early as the beginning of the twelfth century, it had forbidden the selling of men for slaves;[16] and, during the generations that followed, as long as serfs were still legally attached to the soil, it had continued its blessed work. In its eyes, all men were equal; it refused not to receive into the holy ranks of its priesthood even the sons of bondsmen, and its ministers constantly impressed upon dying lords the solemn duty of setting free their slaves.

This noble transformation was not yet quite complete, and it suffered a severe check from a dreadful plague, which swept away millions of people in this reign; but, by the end of the French war and of the civil strife which followed it, slaves had for ever 'ceased to breathe in England.'

1. See, *e.g.*, pp. 52, 56.
2. **Peers,** this name for the House of Lords began to be used in the reign of Edward II.
3. **Speaker,** the Chairman or President of the House of Commons.
4. 1342.
5. It is worth noticing that members of the Commons were paid at this time, the knights of the shire receiving four shillings a day and the burghers two.
6. This practice was introduced in the previous reign.
7. At the present time every member of the House of Commons accepting any office under the Crown must resign and offer himself to his constituents for re-election.
8. In an impeachment the Commons act as accusers, the Peers as judges. The first minister impeached was Lord Latimer, Chamberlain, in 1376.
9. **Treason** strictly means the crime of one who is a *traitor* to his king and country.
10. Passed in 1351.
11. Corresponding to our county members.
12. The Barons desired power; the higher Commons, good administration of the finances; the lower Commons, freedom.
13. In 1086 one-eleventh of the population of England was registered in the Domesday Book as serfs.
14. **Villenage.** The old word *villein* simply meant a serf, one attached to a *ville*, or village.
15. From the well-known story of Aladdin and the Lamp in the Arabian Nights.
16. At the Synod of Westminster in 1106.

THE SON OF THE BLACK PRINCE ON THE THRONE.

1377–1399.

RICHARD II.

THE Rise of the Factions.—The loss of the richest provinces of France had poured into England a great military class,[1] unused to inaction, accustomed to live in splendour on the spoil wrung from a conquered country, and not possessed either of wealth or land to keep up their wonted state. These men gradually joined themselves to the great nobles as paid retainers—adopting the liveries of their various leaders, ready to stand together in defence of one another, and bound by honour to fight in any quarrel of their chief. The wealthy nobles eagerly welcomed such men; for the greater the number of these '*maintainers*' (as they were called) a man had, the more influential a voice he had in the affairs of the country.

At last, England became too small to support so many separate armies; and the barons gradually grouped themselves into hostile parties—each of which strove to exterminate the other. From time to time, the nominal pretext for their feuds varied; but the struggle for existence was really the primary cause of these numerous 'faction fights' which culminated in the Wars of the Roses.

At the beginning of this reign, two of these armed camps confronted one another. In the one was gathered the majority of the barons, forming what might be called an *anti-clerical party*—jealous of the influence of the prelates in the Government,[2] covetous of the great wealth of the Church which would be so convenient for the support of their 'maintainers,' and proclaiming their anxiety to renew vigorously the French war. The leader of this "faction" was John of Gaunt, Duke of Lancaster, who had, for the time being, lost all popularity because of the military disasters of the previous reign and the bad administration of finance.

The rival or '*national*' party had been led by the Black Prince. It supported the old Government by a Parliament of Barons, *Prelates*, and Commons; and its desires might be expressed (in modern phraseology) as 'Peace, Retrenchment, and Reform.' In its camp were the whole of the clergy, and a few of the old nobility with the great body of the representative Commons and the rich merchant class. This faction declared that the Duke of Lancaster had designs upon the throne, and accordingly excluded him and the rest of the King's uncles from the Council appointed to govern during the King's minority.

Accession of the King.—The strife between the two factions was, however, hushed into peace, as all gathered at Westminster to witness the coronation of the little son of the Black Prince.[3] The troubles of the last years of Edward III.'s reign seemed, for the moment, to be forgotten; and men poured out upon the young king the affection which had been won by his renowned father. As the wearied child was borne towards his palace after the excitement of the day, the populace

hailed him with enthusiastic loyalty; and no one could have dreamt that the prince so joyously crowned would fall by the hand of the assassin in a gloomy prison cell.

Great danger threatened the country. The ships of the French king swept the channel; Rye and Winchelsea were both attacked, and a descent was made upon the Isle of Wight. Accordingly, the Commons strove to bring about a reconciliation between the two parties. When asked to take steps for the defence of the realm, they advised that Lancaster should become President of the Council of Peers chosen for the purpose.[4]

Before granting any supplies, however, they insisted that the *money should be paid into the hands of two treasurers named by themselves*, who were to be charged not to allow it to be diverted from the purpose for which it was intended.

The war was quite unsuccessful; the coasts were ravaged by the enemy, Lancaster was defeated, and the Scots laid siege to Berwick. It thus became necessary to raise money for the carrying on of the war and for the defence of the realm. For this purpose, a *poll-tax* was levied,[5] but produced not half the sum required. Accordingly, in 1380, a second payment was imposed on every male and female above the age of fifteen. The tax pressed very heavily on the poorer classes, and the rough way in which it was exacted greatly incensed the people.

The outbreak took place in Kent. A brutal collector offered a rude insult to the daughter of a tiler[6] at Dartford. The father, hearing the shrieks of his wife and child, leaped down from the roof where he was working and smote the ruffian to the earth with his lathing-staff. This was the signal for a great insurrection, for the whole

country was in an excited state, and a spark was sufficient to kindle a great conflagration.

The Insurrection of the Serfs.—At this time the oppressed peasants all over Europe were struggling towards emancipation from thraldom. In England the wretched serfdom, the oppressive laws passed after the Black Plague, the return from war of the common soldiers (who told how *they, and not the nobles*, had won the famous victories), the preaching of the friars [7] and of Wicliffe, all had stirred into life the dormant spirit of freedom in the hearts of the villeins. The free peasant and the artisan, ground down till they felt that it was as good to perish as to labour in misery, joined the movement; and the insurrection soon spread westward to Hampshire and northward to the Humber.

Each County had its chosen "King of the Commons;" [8] thus the men of Kent assembled under Wat Tyler, and Essex followed a priest called Jack Straw. The insurgents declared themselves loyal subjects of King Richard, and although, as we shall see, they acted in a very violent and revolutionary way, the rising was, in fact, one for freedom from great oppression.

A hundred thousand men assembled at Blackheath, where a popular preacher named John Ball [9] addressed them on the injustice of slavery and the natural equality of men. He took as his text the popular couplet—

> "When Adam delved and Eve span,
> Who was then the gentleman?"

On the 12th of June, ten thousand of them waited at Rotherhithe on the Thames for the promised coming of the king. The young Richard wished to hear their complaints; but at the sight of the royal barge they

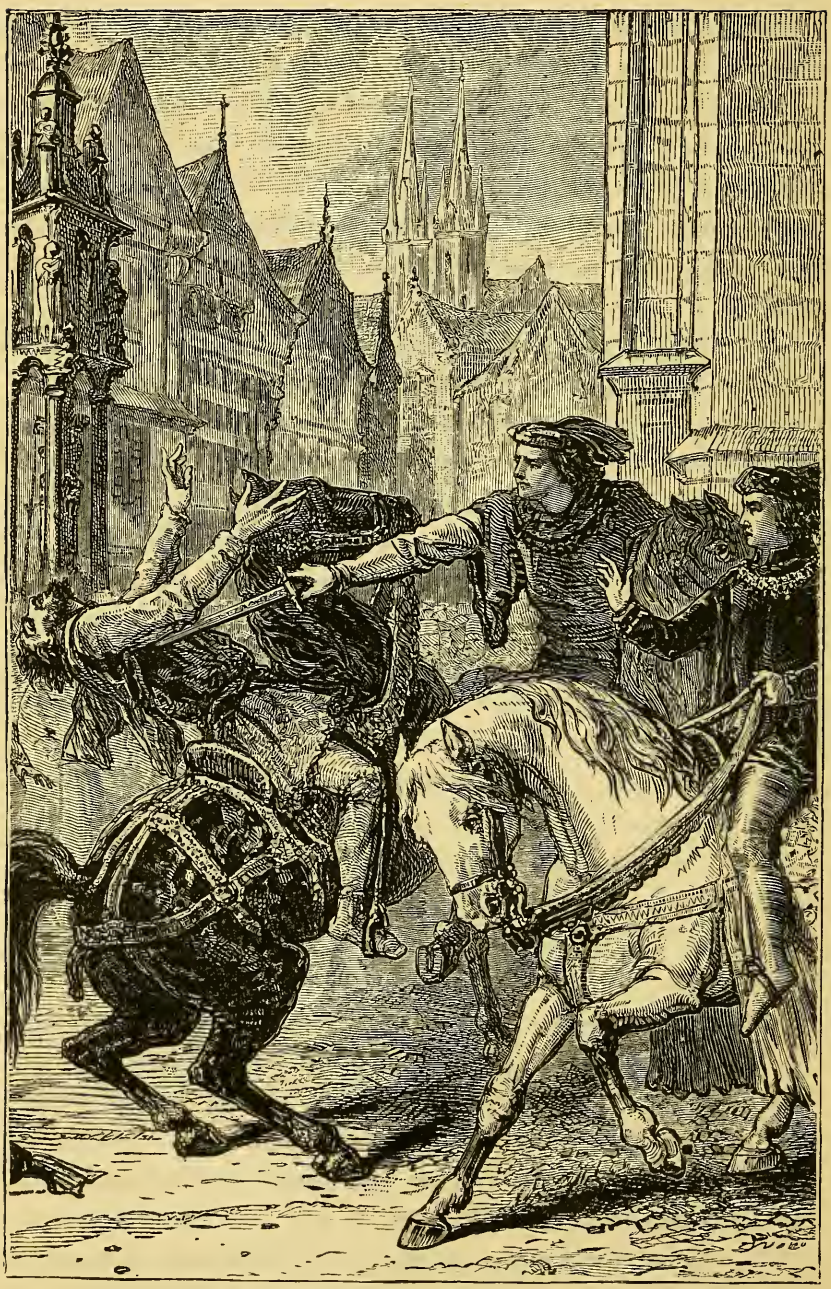
uttered the most dreadful cries, and their bearing was so hostile that the king was not allowed to trust himself in their midst. Bidding his men rest on their oars at a little distance from the bank, he asked the mob what requests they had to make. They answered not, but shouted to him to come ashore. "No! no!" said one of the courtiers, "you are not properly dressed, gentlemen."

The furious crowd then streamed along the river side towards the capital. At first, they were refused admittance; but finally they were allowed to pass across London Bridge, and to spread themselves over the city. Then they acted with great violence, breaking open Newgate and other prisons, setting fire to the palace of the Savoy,[10] and cruelly murdering many Flemish merchants whom they ignorantly hated as foreigners. At the same time, however, strict orders had been issued against theft; and one knave, detected pilfering a goblet or bowl of money from the burning Savoy, was hurled into the flames.

On the 14th, the king met the more orderly portion of the insurgents[11] at Mile End, a pleasant meadow used for the sports of the citizens. There they made known their demands, which were very moderate. They simply asked the abolition of villenage; that the rent of land should be lowered, and fixed at fourpence an acre; that all should have liberty to buy and sell at fairs and markets; and that a general pardon be proclaimed.

Richard granted all their requests, and thirty clerks were employed to draw out rapidly the royal letters of pardon and redress. The gratified insurgents then quietly returned home.

Thirty thousand of the wilder spirits, however, remained with Wat Tyler. During the meeting at Mile End, they



THE DEATH OF WAT TYLER.

had plundered the Tower; and put to death those of their enemies whom they could capture. These men, Richard met at Smithfield on the following day. When he appeared, Wat Tyler spurred his horse forward to meet him. While in the presence of the king, the rebel leader had a rude altercation [12] with one of the monarch's attendants, and in his anger laid his hand upon his dagger. Enraged at this apparent threat against his sovereign, Sir William Walworth, the Lord Mayor, struck the rebel to the ground; and he was then quickly despatched.

"Our captain is slain! Let us avenge his death," was the cry that burst from the enraged multitude. Ten thousand bows were bent, and the little party round the king would certainly have perished had not Richard, although but fourteen years of age, galloped boldly up to the surging crowd. "Friends!" he cried with great coolness and courage, "what are you about to do? Would you slay me? Wat Tyler was a traitor! I will be your leader!"

With such words as these, the gallant boy persuaded the mob to follow him quietly to the open fields at Islington. There they were surrounded by a body of armed men, and forced to ask for mercy. The king would not allow them to be harmed, but promised to pardon them and permitted them to return home.

When Parliament met, however, it compelled the king to withdraw all his concessions. When he urged the reasonableness of at least abolishing villenage, he found that the representative Commons were the most clamorous opponents of this wise proposal. They showed how little sympathy they had with the mass of the suffering people. To every argument they answered, "The slaves

are ours!" and even forced the king to recall the pardon he had granted.

Accordingly, a large number of the rebels were executed, and the great rising came to an end, seeming to have but increased the load of suffering borne by the unhappy people.

1. See page 108, where it is shown (1) that chivalry had replaced feudalism, and (2) that the paid professional soldier had taken the place of the old feudal follower.
2. The prelates furnished the majority of the statesmen of the period.
3. Richard was born in 1367, and was now ten years old.
4. The Commons here took a backward step. They had at first dealt only with money bills; they gave that reason for naming a Council of *Peers*, saying that they themselves had nothing to do with matters of state.
5. **Poll-tax**, a tax of so much a *head*, *i.e.*, on each person The first tax ranged from 4d. to a peasant to £6 13s. 4d. to an earl.
6. **Tiler**, a slater or roofmaker.
7. See page 59.
8. The name 'King of the Commons' was actually used by the rebel leaders in Norfolk and Suffolk.
9. Ball had been rescued from Maidstone jail.
10. The Savoy, in the Strand, belonged to the then unpopular John of Gaunt.
11. Probably those from Essex and the district north of the Thames.
12. **Altercation**, quarrel, dispute.

A PERIOD OF REVOLUTION.
1382–1399.

THE Barons and the King.—The alarm caused by the rising of the serfs seems to have, for a short time, led the rival factions to moderate their hostility; but mutual distrust soon manifested itself, and eventually led to a series of the most violent attacks upon the constitution. It also paralysed all national efforts, for whatever public enterprise was supported by one party was certain to be frustrated by the jealousy of the other.[1] At length, John of Gaunt, weary of the perpetual atmosphere of suspicion and doubt, withdrew to Spain, leaving the leadership of his party in the hands of his brother Thomas, Duke of Gloucester.[2]

As the King grew up, he became more and more

impatient of the control of the Council, and began to choose his favourites and advisers for himself. Now, Richard, who was very handsome, was devoted to pleasure and most luxurious in his style of life. Accordingly, he was fond of favourites[3] who could amuse and delight him, and he allowed mere personal gratification and liking to outweigh all considerations of kingly duty. In this respect, he was following in the very footsteps of his unhappy predecessor Edward II.[4]

Again, among Richard's fixed ideas was one of inveterate dislike of his own kinsmen. Accordingly, even the ministers he trusted were always 'new men,'[5] and of the party opposed to his uncles.

In both of these respects the King's action was very unfortunate; for soon the older peers drew closer and closer together under the leadership of Gloucester, while the newer nobility gathered round the young Richard. Thus, for the rest of the reign, we have a life-and-death struggle between the *Faction of the Barons* and the *Faction of the King.*

The Barons seize the Power.—The Barons struck the first blow. The French King had threatened a great invasion of England, and the cunning Gloucester appealed to the national feeling of indignation. "Whose fault was it," asked the people, "that the despised fugitives of Creçy and Poitiers were now threatening 'this royal throne of kings, this sceptred isle'?" "Of that minister," replied Gloucester, "who drove into exile the 'time-honoured' Lancaster — the mushroom Earl of Suffolk, the trusted adviser of the King, the all-powerful treasurer who did with the revenue what he pleased."

Parliament insisted that inquiry should be made into the administration of the finances, but Richard petu-

lantly said that he would not dismiss the meanest varlet in his kitchen for Parliament. In spite of this, Suffolk was impeached, dismissed from office and imprisoned.

Nor was this all; for the king was compelled, by an ominous reference to the deposition of Edward II., to agree to the appointment of a commission of regency. The power of the commissioners was to be absolute, and it was declared to be treason even to counsel opposition. This marks *the first great revolution of the reign; the establishment of a despotic baronial oligarchy in place of a limited constitutional monarchy.*[6]

Some of the barons were prepared, even then, to depose the king; and all of them were determined that he should have no advisers chosen from any party but their own. Accordingly, in 1388, a Parliament was summoned which set itself to exterminate all the leaders of the king's faction—favourites, ministers, judges, personal friends were alike impeached and swept away. So stern were the proceedings of this assembly that it has ever since been known as 'The Wonderful and Merciless Parliament.'

The King Absolute.—A year afterwards, the king, who had given no indication of his purpose, quietly assumed the power. At a meeting of the council, he asked Gloucester how old he was. "Twenty-two, sire," replied the Duke. "Then," said the king, "I am now of age; and, like every other heir in my kingdom, am old enough to manage my own affairs. I thank you all for the trouble you have taken for me, but shall hereafter require your services no longer."

Richard now seemed to have forgotten his old dislikes, and for eight years ruled extremely well. Much of this wise conduct was due to the gentle influence of

the good Queen Anne; but that princess died in 1394. Two years later, the king married Isabella of France; and strengthened by this alliance, he seems to have prepared himself to take vengeance for the doings of the Wonderful Parliament. The moderation of his rule had stilled all the suspicions of the barons, some of whom had actually withdrawn from Gloucester, and joined themselves to the king.[7]

At last the hour had come. Gloucester and his two most devoted friends, Warwick and Arundel, were suddenly arrested. The first named was residing at his castle of Pleshy in Essex. Thither went his royal nephew with a gay train, and was most courteously received. But, while the gorgeously dressed and smiling hypocrite was engaging his aunt the Duchess in '*friendly*' conversation, the Earl Marshall dragged the aged Duke across his own lawn towards the river, where he was then thrown into a boat, rowed out to a ship, and borne away to distant Calais.

This son of the 'Great Edward' was never again seen by his friends. When Parliament called for him to receive judgment, the Earl Marshall coolly replied that "he could not bring the Lord Duke, for he had been dead for several days at Calais."

All believed that Gloucester had been foully murdered. His adherents swore to inflict a punishment as bloody as the crime; and the people looked askance upon a young king who could keep so long the memory of a past offence, and could take, even upon the aged brother of his glorious father, so cruel a revenge.

The obsequious assembly now granted to Richard the tax on wool and hides *for life*, and *appointed a committee to represent Parliament* for the future. This con-

stitutes the *second revolution* of this reign. The former had given to an oligarchy powers greater than those of the king; this made the monarch absolute, and handed over to a few of his supporters the whole of the functions of Parliament.

Fall of Richard.—Henry, the son of John of Gaunt, was now made Duke of Hereford; and the Earl Marshall who arrested Gloucester was created Duke of Norfolk. These two barons (formerly friends of the murdered noble, and therefore still hated by the king) now quarrelled, and Hereford accused Norfolk of treasonable conversation. This charge, Norfolk declared to be false.

As was frequently done in those times in disputes between knights, the matter was referred to a *Court of Chivalry;* and it was agreed to settle the question by a wager of battle. The fight was to take place at Coventry; but, on the appointed day, when the marshal of the lists had called upon God to defend the right, and had even given his order, 'Sound trumpets! Set forward, combatants!' the king at the last moment stopped the encounter. He then, amid the greatest popular excitement, banished both of the dukes from the realm—Norfolk for life, Hereford for ten years.

The latter, the king's own cousin, became the idol of the people; they followed him in thousands to the ship which was to bear him away, and longed for the time of his return.

Having thus got rid of all his opponents, Richard began to rule in a most arbitrary and oppressive way. None dared to speak against anything he did, and his favourites encouraged him to the most despotic acts. He gave himself up to a luxurious mode of living;

indeed, no former King of England ever kept up such state.[8] To refill his empty exchequer, he compelled all who had been adherents of Gloucester to pay great sums of money for pardon, fined seventeen counties for having aided the same duke, and exacted forced loans from all the wealthy men in the kingdom.[9]

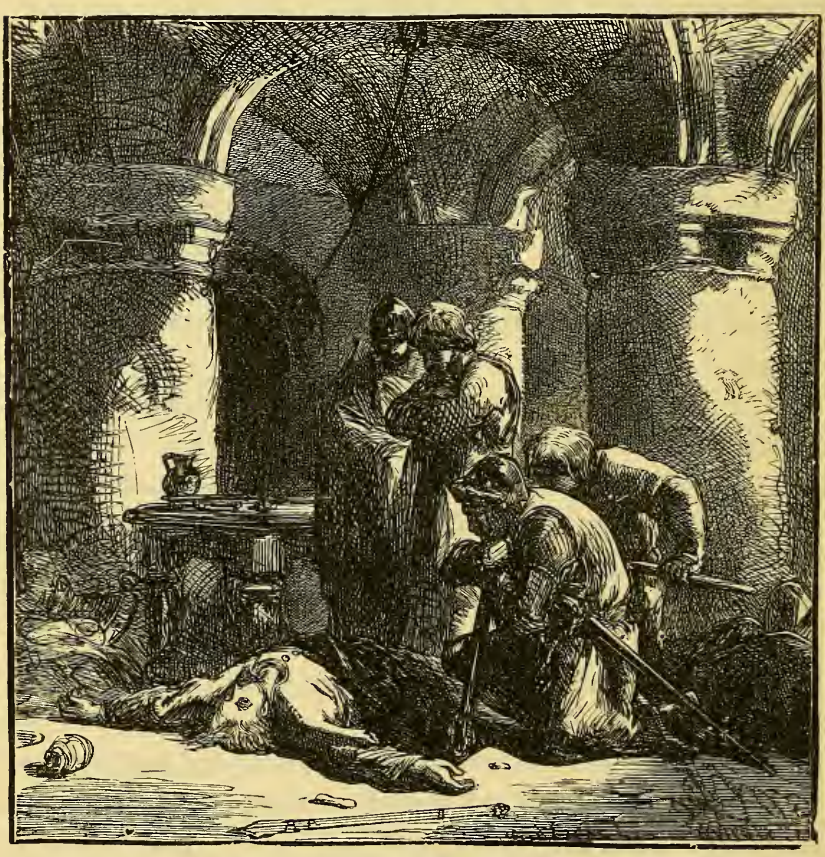
At this juncture the aged Duke of Lancaster died, and Richard illegally seized upon his estate. The rightful heir was the banished Henry of Hereford, and the people murmured loud at the injustice done to their absent favourite. Heedless of the gathering discontent, Richard led an expedition to Ireland; and, while he was there, his cousin landed in Yorkshire, proclaiming that he had come merely to demand the property of his dead father.

The barons and the populace alike thronged to the standard of the returned exile. The terrified ministers and favourites of the king fled to the west, but were given up to the triumphant duke, and put to death. An army which had been gathered for the king in Wales disbanded, and six thousand men who came over with Richard from Ireland went over to the foe. His very dog is said to have abandoned him, to lick the hand of his enemy.

The king was soon taken captive, and led in triumph to London. A Parliament met in autumn. Before its meeting, Richard had resigned his crown; but, in addition, he was then *solemnly deposed for having broken his coronation oath.*[10] His cousin, Henry Bolingbroke, Duke of Hereford and of Lancaster, was then appointed in his stead.

The last scene of this wasted life took place at Pontefract Castle. A wasted life! For the affection of Richard

for his friends, the gleams of courage and power that now and then showed themselves, his refined literary tastes, make us feel that the son of the Black Prince could have been something nobler than the extravagant fop, the leader of fashion, and the hater of his kinsmen.



DEATH OF RICHARD.

None know certainly the manner of his death. Shakespeare represents him as having been murdered in his cell, valiantly struggling with his base assassins. Others whispered that he was starved to death; and yet others, weeping, told how the broken-hearted prisoner refused

to eat, and willingly passed away from a world which had lost all charm for him.

1. Thus both a French war and an invasion of Scotland ended in disaster, and were followed by accusation and counter-accusation of treachery.
2. His second wife, Constance of Castile, was heiress of Pedro the Cruel, King of Spain. See page 121.
3. The chief of these was a man named De Vere, whom Richard made Earl of Oxford, Marquis of Dublin, and then Duke of Ireland.
4. See page 93.
5. That is, *not of the old nobility.* The chief of these was Michael de la Pole, son of a rich merchant of Hull. Richard made him Earl of Suffolk.
6. Richard held a secret council at Nottingham, which declared the action of the barons to be treasonable; and an attempt was made to raise the army at Chester, but all failed.
7. Among these were two who had taken a leading part in the revolution of 1388, viz., Henry of Hereford, son of John of Gaunt, and Thomas Mowbray, Earl of Nottingham.
8. He wore a dress enriched with gold, silver, and precious stones, valued at 3000 merks or £2000—a sum equal to £30,000 at the present time!
9. All of these charges referred to the time of the Wonderful Parliament, *ten years* before.
10. See page 93. Richard II., in many respects of life and character, resembled his equally unfortunate predecessor Edward II.

ENTRANCE OF BOLINGBROKE AND THE CAPTIVE RICHARD INTO LONDON.[1]

Duchess of York. My lord, you told me, you would tell
the rest,
When weeping made you break the story off
Of our two cousins coming into London.

York. Where did I leave?

Duch. At that sad stop, my lord,
Where rude misgoverned[2] hands, from windows' tops,
Threw dust and rubbish on King Richard's head.

York. Then, as I said, the duke, great Bolingbroke,
Mounted upon a hot and fiery steed,
Which his aspiring[3] rider seemed to know,—
With slow, but stately pace kept on his course,
While all tongues cried—God save thee, Bolingbroke!
You would have thought the very windows spake,
So many greedy looks of young and old

Through casements darted their desiring eyes
Upon his visage; and that all the walls,
With painted imagery,[4] had said at once,—
Jesu preserve thee! Welcome Bolingbroke!
Whilst he, from one side to the other turning,
Bare-headed, lower than his proud steed's neck,
Bespake them thus,—I thank you, countrymen:
And thus still doing, thus he passed along.

Duch. Alas, poor Richard! where rides he the while?

York. As in a theatre, the eyes of men,
After a well-graced actor leaves the stage,
Are idly bent on him that enters next,
Thinking his prattle to be tedious:
Even so, or with much more contempt, men's eyes
Did scowl on Richard; no man cried, God save him;
No joyful tongue gave him his welcome home:
But dust was thrown upon his sacred head;
Which with such gentle sorrow he shook off,—
His face still combating with tears and smiles,
The badges of his grief and patience,—
That had not God, for some strong purpose, steeled
The hearts of men, they must perforce have melted,
And barbarism itself have pitied him.
But Heaven had a hand in these events;
To whose high will we bound[5] our calm contents,[6]
To Bolingbroke we are sworn subjects now,
Whose state and honour I for aye allow.

SHAKESPEARE, Richard II., Act v. Scene ii.

1. The speakers are the Duke and Duchess of York, uncle and aunt of both Richard and Henry.
2. **Misgoverned**, unrestrained.
3. **Aspiring**, ambitious.
4. The people gazing from the windows are here likened to painted cloths or banner tapestry, so that the very walls seemed to speak.
5. That is, *in accordance with* the will of Heaven we limit our desires.
6. **Contents** here means, 'that which will content us.'

II. LANCASTER AND YORK.

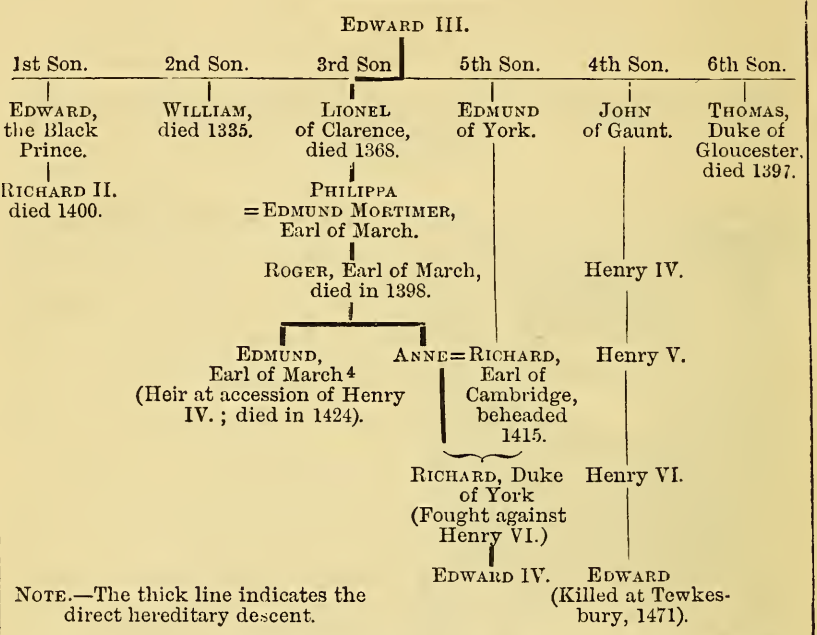
THE UNQUIET TIME OF KING HENRY THE FOURTH.[1]

HENRY IV.

KING by Parliamentary Title. — The new king was a man of soaring ambition and lofty pride. He had also great prudence, and could pursue consistently through a course of years any line of action upon which he had determined; but his suspicious disposition frequently led him to offend his supporters, and thus endangered the success of his wise policy.

His position was indeed a most difficult one; and Shakespeare represents him as 'wan with care,' unable to sleep, and lamenting that 'uneasy lies the head that wears a crown.' Henry IV. was king by parliamentary title alone; and, in electing him to the throne, Parliament had claimed a power never exercised since the time of the Saxon Witenagemote.[2] On the deposition of Edward II., his son, the next heir, had been allowed to succeed;[3] but, in removing Richard II. from the throne, Parliament had passed over the lineal successor and conferred the sovereignty on one who had not the hereditary right.

TABLE SHOWING THE DESCENT OF THE HOUSES OF LANCASTER AND YORK.


EDWARD III.
1st Son.
2nd Son.
3rd Son
5th Son.
4th Son.
6th Son.
EDWARD, the Black Prince.
WILLIAM, died 1335.
LIONEL of Clarence, died 1368.
EDMUND of York.
JOHN of Gaunt.
THOMAS, Duke of Gloucester, died 1397.
RICHARD II. died 1400.
PHILIPPA
=EDMUND MORTIMER, Earl of March.
ROGER, Earl of March, died in 1398.
Henry IV.
EDMUND, Earl of March[4] (Heir at accession of Henry IV.; died in 1424).
ANNE=RICHARD, Earl of Cambridge, beheaded 1415.
Henry V.
RICHARD, Duke of York (Fought against Henry VI.)
Henry VI.
EDWARD IV.
EDWARD (Killed at Tewkesbury, 1471).
NOTE.—The thick line indicates the direct hereditary descent.

In accepting the crown, Henry violated the feudal law for whose breach he had complained against Richard II.,[5] and he might well look for the determined opposition of a large section of the nobles. Accordingly, although he himself was animated by the aristocratic spirit, he sought to gain the aid of the Church. For this purpose, he passed very severe laws [6] against the Lollards,[7] and even spoke of organising another Crusade—

> "To chase these pagans, in those holy fields,
> Over whose acres walked those blessed feet,
> Which, fourteen hundred years ago, were nail'd
> For our advantage on the bitter cross." [8]

For the same reason, he was forced to yield to the demands of the House of Commons in order to maintain

that popularity which had borne him to the throne. Thus he played the part of the champion of order and law against baronial disorder and anarchy. It is for this reason that his comparatively short rule is very important in our constitutional history. During the early years of this reign, while Henry was engaged in a great struggle for power, *the Commons claimed the sole right of introducing money bills*, and insisted that the king should not be present during the discussion of such measures. They also fully confirmed the system of fixing the special purposes for which their grants were to be used, and of paying them to treasurers of their own appointment. Both of these principles have been maintained to the present day.

The Lower House further asserted the privilege of freedom from arrest for its members during the session of Parliament, and that of presenting petitions to the king by word of mouth. Finally, by naming counsellors, whose advice the king was solely to follow but who were to have no power to interfere with the common law, they established a *strictly limited monarchy* at the very moment of Henry's greatest triumph.[9]

Attacks upon Henry's Power, 1399-1408. — For nine years Henry's position remained insecure. Hardly had he ascended the throne, when a conspiracy threatened both his life and his power. It completely failed; and the leaders fell victims to the vengeance of the populace, who would brook no rising against their chosen prince.

A far more serious danger next threatened the House of Lancaster. This was a great *coalition*, which united against the king not only the adherents of Richard, but Henry's former friends the Percies of Northumberland, and the people of Wales. These were supported by a Scottish army and the promise of aid from France.

The standard of revolt was first raised in *Wales*. There, a knight named Glendower[10] had been refused redress for the seizure of his lands and appealed to his fellow-countrymen to arm in defence of his rights. The Welsh, as a nation, rallied round him; and the English king, in retaliation, put in force the severe laws of Edward I. against the mountaineers. Snow and storm proved Glendower's allies; and even when Henry himself led an attack upon 'the great magician,' he was completely repulsed; and the victorious Cambrian was proclaimed Prince of Wales.

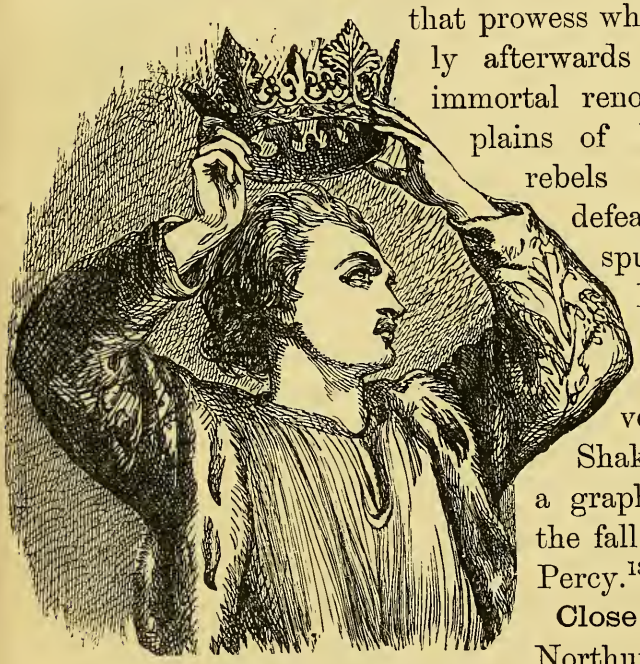
It was at this time[11] that the *Percies*[12] made alliance with the rebel. They had been Henry's main supporters when he landed at Ravenspur to assert his rights against Richard; but their great services had met with small reward,[13] and now they were still more deeply wounded. The younger Percy had married a sister of Edward Mortimer. This baron, it so happened, had been captured by Glendower; and, simply because he was uncle to the young Earl of March,[14] Henry refused to allow him to be ransomed.[15]

The *Scots* had been won over to the cause of the insurgents very curiously. A Scottish force had invaded the north of England, and had been defeated by Percy at the battle of *Homildon Hill*.[16] Their leader, the martial Earl of Douglas, was captured, and then formed a warm friendship for the fiery Hotspur. He accordingly promised to join in the combined attack.

The conspirators in England gathered an army under the pretext of a proposed expedition against Scotland, and then hurried to the west to join Glendower. Before the junction could be effected, the royal army had overtaken them at *Shrewsbury*.[17] Terms were offered to the rebels,

but were haughtily refused—"the Douglas and the Hotspur both together are confident against the world in arms."

Then was fought one of the fierce and bloody battles which were so frequent in the long struggle between Lancaster and York. Henry IV. directed his troops very skilfully; but victory was largely due to the gallant conduct of the young Prince Hal, who gave promise of that prowess which was shortly afterwards to win him immortal renown upon the plains of France. The rebels were totally defeated. Hotspur was slain, Douglas captured, and Glendower driven to the hills. Shakespeare gives a graphic account of the fall of the gallant Percy.[18]



"ACCUSING IT, I PUT IT ON MY HEAD."

Close of the Reign. Northumberland made two further attempts to overthrow his enemy, and was finally slain at *Bramham Moor*, near Tadcaster, in Yorkshire.[19]

Towards the end of the reign, Henry, whose health grew very feeble,[20] became suspicious of the able and popular Prince of Wales.[21] Shakespeare makes Prince Henry give the following impassioned reply to his father,[22] who had reproached him for having lifted the crown and placed it on his own head:—

"There is your crown;
And He that wears the crown immortally
Long guard it yours! . . . . .
Accusing it, I put it on my head;
To try with it,—as with an enemy,
That had before my face murder'd my father[23]—
The quarrel of a true inheritor.
But if it did infect my blood with joy,
Or swell my thoughts to any strain of pride;
If any rebel or vain spirit of mine
Did, with the least affection of a welcome,
Give entertainment to the might of it;
Let God for ever keep it from my head!
And make me as the poorest vassal is,
That doth with awe and terror kneel to it!"

The king at last succumbed to the terrible disease which had so often nearly proved fatal to him. He died at Westminster in 1413, and was buried at Canterbury.

1. This is the title of the first of the eight chapters of Hall's Chronicle, 'The Union of the Two Noble and Illustrate Families of Lancastre and Yorke.'
2. **Witenagemote,** *the meeting of the wise men,* the great council of the Saxons. They had the power of electing the king.
3. See page 96.
4. Henry kept in captivity this young earl—the lineal heir to the throne.
5. That is, when Richard seized the estates of Henry's father, John of Gaunt. See p. 141.
6. The most severe law was passed in 1401. By it, any person condemned for heresy was to be handed over to the civil power and publicly burned.
7. **Lollards,** the followers of Wicliffe. The word comes from the German, 'lollen,' to *hum* or *drone;* it was a term of contempt, and means the 'psalm-singing *drones.*'
8. Shakespeare's Henry IV., Part I. act i. sc. 1.
9. 1407, after the dangers to his throne had passed away.
10. **Glendower.** He had held a high position in Richard II.'s court, and claimed to be descended from Llewellyn. Both his followers and his foes believed that he had magic power.
11. In 1402.
12. **The Percies.** The Earl of Northumberland and his son Henry—surnamed Hotspur.
13. Henry IV. owed them £20,000, and always deferred payment. He had slighted them in other ways.
14. See the table in this Lesson.
15. Mortimer soon solved the difficulty by marrying the daughter of Glendower and acknowledging his title as Prince of Wales.
16. **Homildon Hill,** near Wooler, in Northumberland. Fought in 1402.
17. In 1403.
18. The teacher should here read Shakespeare's account, Henry IV., Part I. act iv. sc. 4.
19. His two attempts were in 1405 and 1408.
20. He was first attacked with leprosy, and afterwards suffered from epileptic fits.
21. Stories are told of this prince's wild and dissipated conduct in youth; the ability and energy he displayed in all his public duties would lead us to doubt their truth.
22. Henry IV., Part II. act iv. sc. 4.
23. Henry had been in one of his fits (see note 20), and the prince thought he was dead.

RENEWAL OF THE HUNDRED YEARS' WAR.[1]

HENRY V.

CHARACTER of Henry V. Motives for War.—The new king was a man of brilliant ability. As a *statesman* he was most wise —a firm upholder of law and a stern lover of justice. He was equally distinguished as a *diplomatist*,[2] being able, even in his youth, to cope with the most experienced of foreign politicians. To crown all, he was undoubtedly the *first soldier* of his day; his ardent personal bravery inspired a spirit of heroism and devotion in the meanest of his soldiers, while the cool firmness with which he carried out his skilfully conceived plans made him "terrible in constant resolution;" he had also in a high degree that inventive faculty,[3] that fertility of resource, which has always distinguished great generals.

"Hear him but reason in divinity,
And, all admiring, with an inward wish
You would desire the king were made a prelate:
Hear him debate of commonwealth affairs,
You would say,—it hath been all-in-all his study:
List his discourse of war, and you shall hear
A fearful battle rendered you in music:
Turn him to any cause of policy,
The Gordian knot[4] of it he will unloose,
Familiar as his garter."[5]

The inducements which led this noble king to renew the delusive dream of French empire were various. In the first place, the *opportunity* was most tempting. The king of France was imbecile; and there arose a fierce dispute as to the regency between the Dukes of Burgundy and Orleans.[6] Now, Henry IV. had in his later years supported both in turns, and had received from the Orleanists full possession of Guienne.[7]

Henry V., accordingly, proposed to revive the claim of Edward III.,[8] and in this he was ardently supported by the *clergy*. Parliament had brought in a bill for stripping the Church of a large portion of her property, and the prelates thought a foreign war would distract the attention of the people from this scheme.[9] They therefore willingly granted Henry a large sum, and the Archbishop of Canterbury urged him to the war.

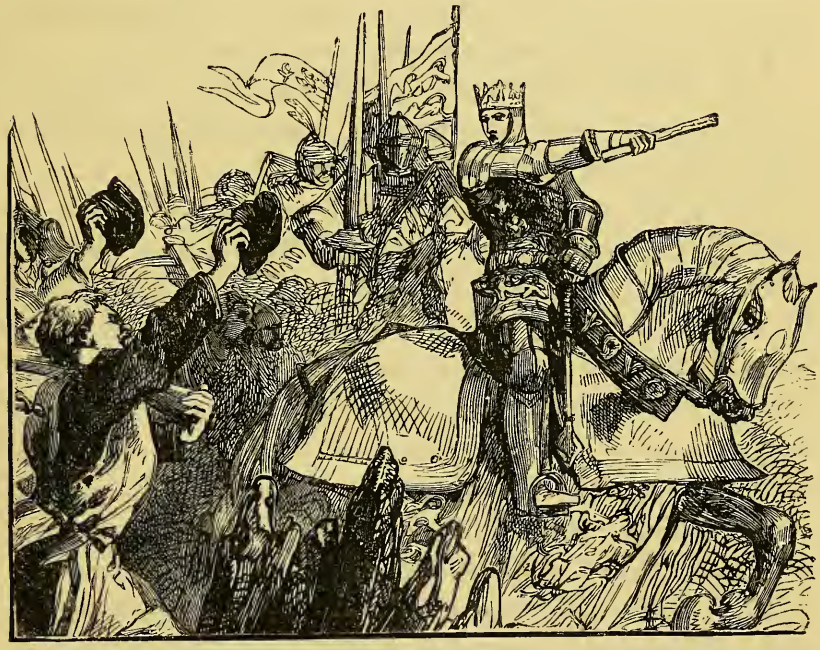
Further, Henry was conscious of the defective title of his family to the throne,[10] and ambitious to rival the achievements of Edward III. and the Black Prince. In a word, his motives were rather those of an uneasy king and of an ambitious knight than those of a lofty-minded patriot bent on advancing the prosperity of his country.

Preparations for the expedition were almost completed when the discovery of a conspiracy against the king's life caused some delay; the guilty leaders were condemned to death. At length, his fleet of 1600 vessels sailed from Southampton,[11] carrying to the coast of France a fine army of 6000 men-at-arms and 24,000 archers. They landed unopposed at the mouth of the Seine.

The First Invasion: Harfleur.—Henry's first undertaking was the siege of the strong fortress of *Harfleur*.[12] The garrison fought very bravely, and repulsed attack

after attack. Five weeks passed away before the brave defenders felt further resistance to be hopeless, and surrendered to the stern besiegers. The king is represented as addressing his soldiers in martial words before they made the final assault:—

"Once more unto the breach, dear friends, once more;
Or close the wall up with our English dead!"



Henry's army had been terribly wasted during these weeks of struggle; little more than half of his original force was left. Ashamed, however, to return to England in such a plight, he determined to follow the famous example of Edward III., and march towards Calais.

His one great difficulty was the passage of the Somme. He found every bridge and ford strictly guarded,[13] and a large army stationed on the opposite side. Another

great force was advancing in his rear, and he felt for a moment almost baffled. At last he marched up the river, intending to cross it near its source; but after passing Amiens he found a ford unguarded and led his wearied soldiers to the longed-for Calais bank.

In this march, the king maintained strict discipline. His orders were very clear, and death was the penalty of disobedience:—"We give express charge that, in our marches through the country, there be nothing forced from the villages, nothing taken unless paid for."

The Night before the Battle.—The French fell back towards Calais for four days, and then posted themselves before the Castle of Agincourt.[14]

The great battle which was now to take place resembled in nearly every respect the famous victories of the Black Prince. The French army was still a *feudal* one—strong in mail-clad cavalry, and commanded, not by trained captains, but by 'high dukes, great princes, barons, lords, and knights.' Henry's army was, on the contrary, an army of light-clad archers, supported by men-at-arms, and led by professional soldiers. The king himself was no mere knight of chivalry, but a prudent strategist and skilled leader.

The French commanders had chosen a foolish position, where their great masses of men[15] were cooped up between two woods, so that they were forced to attack with a narrow front. The soil was heavy with the autumn rains; this was *fatal* to the already wearied chivalry of France.

How dreadful and yet beautiful was the scene during that long autumn night, which was so soon to be followed by a day of carnage! The hum of armies filling the still air, the sharp clink of the busy hammer of the

armourer, and ever and anon the boastful neigh of steed piercing the 'night's dull ear,' form a majestic picture of war in its most romantic aspect.

In the one camp, confidence in their numbers has produced a boastful spirit of revelry, and the soldiers glory beforehand in their expected victory: in the other, an air of solemn and even religious feeling prevails; the stern warriors there know well the danger they have to encounter, and sit soberly by their fires—thinking of the coming struggle, and half-uttering the prayer, 'God's arm strike with us, 'tis a fearful odds.'

The noblest of all on that fire-lit plain is the young king of England. Our hearts glow within us as we look upon him, walking from sentry to sentry, and from tent to tent, and hear him praying the God of battles to steel his soldiers' hearts, and to possess them not with fear.

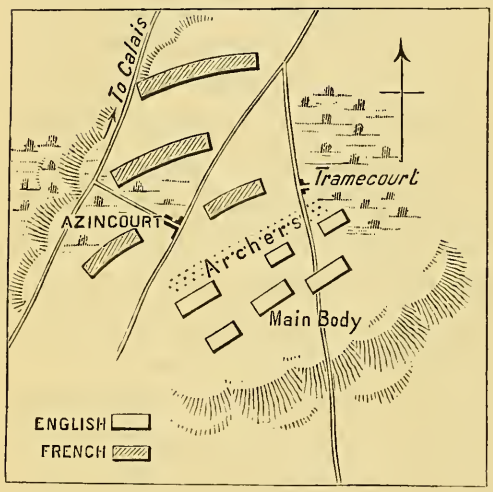
The Battle of Agincourt, 1415.—The French were arranged in three solid masses. The two first fought on foot—a style of fighting for which their armour and the ground ill fitted them. The third line remained mounted in the rear, to complete the work of slaughter which, it was expected, the first lines would begin.

The English army had their invincible archers in front, their heavy infantry and men-at-arms behind. Their skilful leader had devised a means of protecting his bowmen from attack. He caused them to be supplied with thick stakes, sharpened at both ends, and directed them to stick these in a slanting position into the ground so as to form a palisade in front of them wherever they halted.

The battle commenced; the archers stepped out a few paces, and then halted, expecting the attack of the enemy's cavalry. But it came not, for the heavily-

burdened and dismounted men had sunk knee-deep in the mud and could not move. Upon this unmoving mass the deadly rain of arrows poured. Those behind, as they pressed forward, but trod down their dying comrades, and then came themselves beneath the fatal torrent.

Then the archers of England, coming out from behind their stakes, slung their bows across their shoulders, and, seizing sword or mace or axe, fell upon the struggling masses of the enemy.



The second line of the French fell in the same way, but the third made a desperate struggle. The English men-at-arms had now come to the support of the gallant bowmen, and opposed their own high daring to the half hopeless fury of the enemy. Henry was again and again attacked. His cousin, the Duke of York, was slain by his side, and the golden crown which he wore over his helmet was cleft down. At last, the houses in the rear of the French were set on fire by a few horsemen whom Henry had sent out early in the day. The disordered cavalry of the foe then turned and fled.[16]

Ten thousand Frenchmen were slain; and, of these, eight thousand were of noble blood. Fully fifteen thousand *knights* were captured. The total English loss was sixteen hundred men. No wonder that Henry ascribed this marvellous triumph to God's anger against the 'vices

that then reigned in France;' and no wonder either that when he came over to London the whole population poured out to welcome their valiant and victorious prince.

Close of the Reign.—After two years' stay in Eng-

HENRY'S TRIUMPHAL ENTRY INTO LONDON.

land, during which he had to suppress a rising of the Lollards, Henry led to France a finer army than before; and in two years, he conquered the whole of Normandy.

The fall of Rouen in 1419 opened the way to Paris. At this crisis, when union among the French might even yet have saved the capital, the cowardly murder of the Duke of Burgundy caused his party to join the English. This led to the Treaty of Troyes,[17] misnamed The Perpetual Peace.

By this treaty, Henry was to marry Catherine, daughter of the French king, to be regent during that monarch's life, and to succeed to the throne on his death. The work which Edward III. and the Black Prince had failed to perform now seemed complete.

France was not yet conquered, however; the spirit of a free people was yet to save her from a foreign rule; and Henry was recalled from England (whither he had gone with his new queen) by the news of the death of his brother Clarence in battle. He hurried to Paris, and his wonted success still attended him. While the new enemies were but half quelled, his health completely broke down; and the hero of Agincourt died at Vincennes in the very flower of his manhood.[18]

1. See p. 105. Henry V. reigned from 1413-1422.
2. **Diplomatist,** one skilled in negotiating with other states.
3. **Inventive faculty,** *i.e.*, the power of finding out new ways of doing things.
4. **Gordian Knot,** i.e., *the difficulty.* This refers to a story told of Gordius, King of Phrygia, in Asia Minor. He tied a knot so that no one could unloose it; and it was prophesied that the fates would give the empire of the world to him who should untie it. Alexander the Great solved the difficulty by cutting the knot with his sword.
5. Shakespeare's play of Henry V., act i. scene 1.
6. The Burgundians were called Bourguignons (pronounced *Boorzhe-wee-nyong*); the Orleanists, Armagnacs (*Ar-man-yack*).
7. See map, page 161.
8. See table, page 106.
9. Shakespeare makes the Archbishop of Canterbury give the following account of what the Bill proposed to take from the clergy—

"As much as would maintain, to the king's honour,
Full fifteen earls, and fifteen hundred knights;
Six thousand and two hundred good esquires;
And, to relief of lazers, and weak age,
Of indigent faint souls, past corporal toil,
A hundred alms-houses, right well supplied;
And to the coffers of the king beside,
A thousand pounds by the year. Thus runs the Bill."

10. See table, page 146.
11. Shakespeare simply calls it Hampton.
12. **Harfleur,** on the right bank of the Seine, near Havre.
13. Some accounts say that the French army was not yet ready.
14. **Agincourt,** in north-east of France.
15. The French are variously numbered at from 50,000 to 100,000 fighting-men.
16. Henry, from a mistaken idea that he was attacked in the rear, ordered the immediate slaughter of all prisoners, and many were slain.
17. **Troyes,** on the Seine, 112 miles S.E. of Paris.
18. Henry was born 1388 and died in 1422. He was therefore 34 years of age at the time of his death.

END OF THE HUNDRED YEARS' WAR WITH FRANCE.

HENRY VI.

THE Minority of Henry VI.—Henry VI. was a child of nine months old, and the work of government was to be carried on by a council. The uncle of the young king, the great Duke of Bedford, was appointed Regent; but was required to devote himself to the work of French conquest. He was an able and noble man; and his presence in England might have so consolidated the power of the house of Lancaster as to avert the civil war which was soon to devastate England. During Bedford's absence in France, the Protectorate of the realm was entrusted to his brother, the Duke of Gloucester; while the person of the infant king was under the guardianship of Cardinal Beaufort.[1]

The former of these, although very popular with the Commons, was a passionate, ill-regulated, and ambitious man. His reckless disregard of the national interests abroad alienated England's most powerful ally,[2] and helped to cause *the entire failure of the scheme of French Empire;* while, at home, his headstrong jealousy of Cardinal Beaufort led to actual tumult, and introduced that state of internal dissension which culminated in the life-and-death struggle of the Wars of the Roses.

Amid these scenes of war and tumult, the lineal heir to the throne[3] was detained a captive in the Tower. His gentle bearing had won the hearts of his keepers; but his strength gradually wasted away. He died in 1424, leaving the redress of his wrongs and the assertion of his family claims to his nephew, Richard, Duke of York;[4] and thus, through the whole of the minority of Henry VI., we hear, mingling with the loud roar of foreign battle and the bitter wrangling of Gloucester and Beaufort, the less noisy but more dangerous murmurs of that civil strife which was yet to change the peaceful fields of England into one vast theatre of war.

From Paris to Orleans, 1422-1429.—The French king[5] died in the same year as Henry V., and, by the treaty of Troyes,[6] the infant king of England became king of France. The idea of a foreign sovereign occupying their throne was most hateful to the French people, and the south-east accepted the Dauphin as king.[7]

The story of the seven years of constant war which followed is full of interest. Bedford, as able a general as his royal brother had been, wished to strengthen the English hold upon the provinces they already had;[8] but he was persuaded to push southwards. The English soldiers were usually successful in the pitched battles. The French had not yet learned from experience; and, in such battles as that of Verneuil,[9] which was as decisive as Agincourt itself, we have the familiar picture of heavy-armed infantry and steel-clad cavalry helplessly slaughtered by the invincible archers of England with their great bows and their impenetrable barrier of pointed stakes.

At last, the English determined to cross the river

Loire, into the territory of the Dauphin.[10] For this purpose, they laid siege to the great town of Orleans[11] and invested it on all sides. A French army gathered for the relief of the city, but was defeated in an attempt to cut off a convoy of provisions[12] advancing from Paris to the English camp. Orleans seemed to be doomed; and the Dauphin, in his despair, spoke of taking refuge in Scotland or in Spain.

MAP TO ILLUSTRATE THE HUNDRED YEARS' WAR WITH FRANCE.

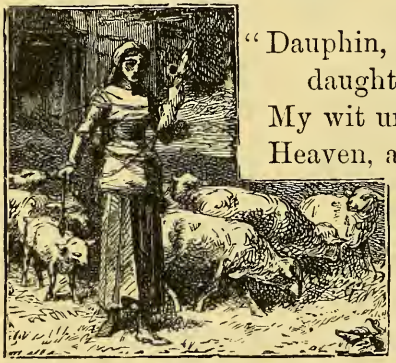
It was at this moment, when man was powerless to save unhappy France, that God raised up one whose religious enthusiasm and inspired love of country re-animated once more the courage of her fellow-countrymen, and rolled back the tide of invasion which threatened her country with immediate destruction.

The Maid of Orleans.—There lived in a little village[13] in the valley of the Meuse, a devout maiden called Joan

of Arc.[14] For years had she brooded over the miseries of her beautiful France, wondering why God allowed such terrible sufferings to afflict the people, and entreating Him to save her country.

Her prayers were at length answered; for, one summer's day, at noon, she seemed to hear a voice from heaven, ordering her 'to go to France for to deliver the kingdom.'[15] Again and again the vision returned to her, and she felt that her spirit could never know rest until she obeyed the behests of her celestial visitant.

The gentle enthusiast was at last presented to the Dauphin and his doubting courtiers, and her words carried conviction even to their worldly hearts:—



"Dauphin, I am by birth a shepherd's daughter,
My wit untrained in any kind of art.
Heaven, and our Lady Gracious, hath it pleased
To shine on my contemptible estate:[16]
Lo! whilst I waited on my tender lambs,
And to sun's parching heat displayed my cheeks,
God's mother deigned to appear to me;
And, in a vision, full of majesty,
Willed me to leave my base vocation,[17]
And free my country from calamity.[18]

Having no hope elsewhere, the leaders of the French army submitted to her guidance. The result proved that they acted most wisely. By this time, the French had learned the art of war; and now the absorbing patriotism of this girl-warrior raised a national instead of a party rallying cry, while the simple piety of her

gentle maidenhood rebuked and banished the immorality

JOAN LEADING THE FRENCH ARMY TO THE RELIEF OF ORLEANS.

which had weakened and disgraced the cause of France.

Loss of the French Provinces.—The success of La Pucelle [19] was great and astonishing. She was entrusted with the command of an army on the 27th April 1429, and within two days was before Orleans. On the following day, her army safely entered the besieged town, bringing the much-needed supplies; within a week more, her continued victories had completely disheartened the boldest of the enemy, and forced them to raise the siege.

The tide of victory for France had now fairly set in. Not only was Orleans rescued; but, within three months, 'The Maid' had led the Dauphin to be crowned at Rheims.[20] In the next year,[21] Joan's success at first continued; but her fate was very sad. While leading a sortie from the town of Compiègne [22] she was captured by the Burgundians, and by them sold to the English. Baffled ambition, humbled military pride, and ignorant superstition knew no mercy; and after a year's imprisonment, she was shamefully burned as a witch in the market-place of Rouen. No words are strong enough to condemn this atrocious act. The efforts of the patriots never ceased until nothing was left of the proud conquests of Albion but the grey walls of Calais.

1. **Cardinal Beaufort,** Bishop of Winchester, second son of John of Gaunt by Catherine Swinford. See table on p. 183.
2. The great Duke of Burgundy.
3. Edmund, Earl of March. See table, p. 146.
4. See table, p. 146.
5. Charles VI.
6. **Troyes,** on the Seine, 112 miles S.E. of Paris.
7. Afterwards crowned as Charles VII.
8. At the death of Henry V., the English held Normandy and the whole of the rest of the North of France except Brittany, Maine, and Anjou, in the north-west. They also held Touraine, which connected their northern possessions with Poitou, Guienne, and Gascony, their provinces in the south-west.
9. **Verneuil,** 100 miles west of Paris.
10. This was at the part of its course where the river makes the great bend to the west.
11. The siege began in October 1428.
12. This was called the Battle of Herrings.
13. **Domremy,** on the frontier between Champagne and Lorraine.
14. **Joan of Arc** was born in 1412. Her name is more correctly Jeanne D'Arc, *i.e.*, of *Arques*, a town in the north-east of France, near the lower waters of the Seine.
15. The first vision was in 1425. Lorraine was then outside of France, that is why she thought the vision told her to '*go to France.*
16. This recalls the words of the Virgin Mary, "For He hath regarded the low estate of His handmaiden."—Luke i. 48.
17. **Base Vocation,** *i.e.*, *lowly calling.*
18. From Henry VI., act i., sc. 3.
19. **La Pucelle,** *i.e.*, 'The Maid.' It is pronounced *Poos-ell.* The Shakespearean pronunciation of this name is *Jan la Poosel.* The modern pronunciation is Joan la Poosell. See Henry VI., act i., sc. 6.
20. **Rheims,** 90 miles north-east of Paris.
21. *I.e.*, 1430.
22. **Compiègne,** 63 miles north-east from Paris.

THE WAR OF THE ROSES.

King.	Date.	Place.	Victorious.	Remarks.
Henry VI.	1455	St. Albans, in Hertfordshire	Y.	The King captured, and the Duke of York placed in office.
	1459	Bloreheath, in Staffordshire	Y.	After this, the Duke of York's army broke up, and he was declared a traitor.
	1460	Northampton	Y.	The Lancastrians completely overthrown by the Earl of Warwick, surnamed the King-Maker. The Queen flees to the Continent, and the King remains a prisoner. The Duke of York *openly claims the throne.*
	1460	Wakefield, in Yorkshire	L.	Queen Margaret gains a great victory. York is executed, and his youngest son assassinated. The war becomes much more savage after this.
	1461	Mortimer'sCross, in Hertfordshire	Y.	The eldest son of the dead Duke, afterwards made king, was here the leader.
	1461	St. Albans, in Hertfordshire	L.	Queen Margaret here defeats Warwick, and releases her husband. She has to retire before the new Duke of York without entering London. The latter is then crowned as Edward IV.
Ed. IV.	1461	Towton, in Yorkshire	Y.	The bloodiest battle in the war. Warwick is the victor, and Margaret takes refuge in Scotland.
	1464	Hedgely Moor	Y.	Margaret had made an attempt to attack from Scotland, but was twice defeated. Henry was captured a year afterwards and taken to the Tower.
	1464	Hexham, in Northumberland	Y.	
Henry VI. (restored)	1471	Barnet, in Hertfordshire	Y.	Warwick had quarrelled with Edward IV. on account of the latter's marriage with Elizabeth Woodville. Edward IV. is driven from the kingdom, but returns and defeats the King-Maker, who is killed.
	1471	Tewkesbury, in Gloucestershire	Y.	Margaret, who had landed in the west, was here defeated. The young Prince Edward was murdered by Edward and his brothers Clarence and Gloucester.
Rd. III.	1485	Bosworth, in Leicestershire	L.	Here the Yorkist Dynasty was overthrown, and Henry Tudor crowned king as Henry VII.

EDWARD IV.

CAUSES of the War.—The fundamental cause is to be sought in the great body of *military maintainers* who have already been described as one of the baneful fruits of the long war with France.[1]

Second in importance must be placed the avowed reason for the conflict—the inherent defect in the Lancastrian title to the throne.[2] To this must be added the long minority of

the gentle Henry VI. He was also subject to periods of imbecility, and this placed the chief power in the hands of his queen, Margaret of Anjou. This princess, not having the largeness of mind to play a statesman-like part, drove to extremities the partisans of the House of York.

Finally, the repeated political murders which had stained with blood every chapter of the family feud of the Plantagenets, had excited a spirit of ferocious hatred between the two parties, which nothing but the dread arbitrament of war could satisfy. Such were the causes which produced the longest civil war that has ever filled England with misery and bloodshed.

The Fall of the House of Lancaster.—The first battle[2] was fought in 1455. The Duke of York declared that he took up arms only to protect his life against the evil designs of the Queen and her advisers. Four years afterwards, the evident determination of Margaret to avenge the defeat of St. Albans compelled the Yorkists once more to take the field. They were again victorious, and it was then that the duke began to disclose the higher ambition which animated him. This led to the breaking up of his army, and the prominent nobles of his party were declared traitors.

A third of the startling changes which distinguish this war soon followed. Warwick, the 'King-Maker,'[3] the most powerful of his supporters, won the great victory of Northampton. The Queen had then to take refuge in Scotland; the poor weak King was captured, and the Duke of York was made regent during his life and publicly proclaimed as heir to the throne.

Now it was that the loftier qualities of Margaret of Anjou showed themselves. Henceforth she appears as a

mother fighting for the rights of her son. Unfortunately her excess of love for that prince, acting upon her overbearing and proud nature, led her to acts of savage cruelty. Calling her adherents around her, she gained at Wakefield the first Lancastrian victory. The Duke of York was captured and put to death, and his youngest son, Rutland, was cruelly slain. Many brutal executions followed, and from this time the war became one of *mutual extermination.*

The victorious Queen marched rapidly towards London, and the heir of the House of York hurried from the west to intercept her—defeating on his way a Lancastrian army[4] which tried to impede his progress. Meanwhile, Margaret gained a second victory at St. Albans—this time overthrowing the redoubted king-maker himself. London was almost within her grasp; but the Londoners refused to admit her, and the approach of the young Duke of York forced her once more to retreat. The White Rose was now triumphant; and he in whose honour it was worn was crowned, amid the acclamations of the people, as Edward IV.

The Yorkist Triumph.[5]—Margaret made one more effort for her loved son, but was hopelessly defeated at the bloody battle of Towton.[6] Snow was falling on a wild afternoon of March when the fierce fight began; darkness hid the combatants from one another but stopped not the work of slaughter; morning found them still in deadly struggle, and only the arrival of a fresh body of troops at noon of the second day turned the trembling scale of victory in favour of the House of York.

Edward IV. was a king who could be great only at intervals. When roused to action by necessity, no one could be more full of energy and vigour, but he lacked

the power of continuous effort. Accordingly, he allowed his passion for Elizabeth Woodville to outweigh all considerations of prudence and king-craft.[7] This marriage mortally offended the proud king-maker, who succeeded in driving Edward from the kingdom. *The imprisoned Henry VI. was then replaced upon the throne.*

The triumph of Warwick was shortlived; for, when Edward IV. returned with Burgundian troops, he was slain in the battle of Barnet. Three weeks later, Margaret, who had landed at Plymouth on the very morning of Warwick's overthrow, was totally defeated; and the young Prince Edward was brutally murdered by the king's brothers.

For fourteen years longer, the House of York occupied the throne. The sickening scenes of slaughter continued; for Gloucester removed from his path both Clarence and the young sons of his brother Edward. He, in his turn, was slain on the fatal field of Bosworth.

Effects of the War.—The first result of this war was that the hordes of maintainers were swept away, and many of the ancient families extirpated. There thus arose a new nobility, who, having no traditions of the feudal past to kindle their ambition, were prepared to form part of the more orderly organisation of a limited monarchy.

This War of the Roses not only gave the death-blow to the feudal aristocracy, but it finally destroyed the system of serfdom which had for ages crushed beneath its iron heel a large section of the people. When the Tudor dynasty ascended the throne, slaves no longer 'breathed in England.'

1. *I.e.*, The Duke of Gloucester (see p. 158). He was assassinated in 1447.
2. In following the course of the war, the table at the beginning of the reign should be closely attended to.
3. **The King-Maker.** In this battle of Northampton he virtually dethroned Henry VI., and *made the Duke of York king*; then, at Towton, his victory over Margaret *secured Edward IV. upon the throne*; and next, his alliance with that queen caused Edward to flee, and *restored the crown to Henry VI.*
4. At Mortimer's Cross.
5. The kings of this dynasty were (1) Edward IV. (1461-1483), (2) Edward V. (1483), (3) Richard III. (1483-1485).
6. Nearly 28,000 men were slain in this battle.
7. **King-craft**, *skill in ruling as a king.*

THE EVE OF BOSWORTH.

EDWARD V.

EDWARD IV. died in 1483, leaving his two young sons, Edward V. and Richard (the eldest but twelve years of age), to the care of his brother, the Duke of Gloucester. This ambitious man, who might be compared to the cold, hard, cruel *steel* of humanity, had already procured the death of his elder brother, the Duke of Clarence; and now caused the princes to be shut up in the Tower, and there assassinated. The murderer assumed the crown as Richard III., but two years later the Lancastrians made a great effort to regain the power, and won the great battle of Bosworth in 1485. Richard was slain; and his conqueror, Henry of Richmond, the first of the Tudors, was proclaimed king. Shakespeare gives the following representation of the two leaders on the eve of the decisive battle:—

SCENE I.—'*Henry of Richmond's tent;*' *speakers, Henry and Lord Stanley.*[1]

Stanley. Farewell: the leisure and the fearful time
Cuts off the ceremonious vows of love!
And ample interchange of sweet discourse,
Which so long sundered friends should dwell upon;
God give us leisure for these rites of love!
Once more, adieu:—Be valiant, and speed well!

Richm. Good lords, conduct him to his regiment;
I'll strive, with troubled thoughts, to take a nap;
Lest leaden slumber peise[2] me down to-morrow,
When I should mount with wings of victory;
Once more, good night, kind lords and gentlemen.

[*Exeunt lords, &c., with Stanley.*

O Thou! whose captain I account myself,
Look on my forces with a gracious eye;
Put in their hands thy bruising irons of wrath,
That they may crush down with a heavy fall
The usurping helmets of our adversaries!
Make us thy ministers of chastisement,
That we may praise thee in thy victory!
To thee I do commend my watchful soul,
Ere I let fall the windows of mine eyes;
Sleeping and waking, oh, defend me still! (*Sleeps.*)

SCENE 2.—*Richard III.'s tent. The usurper, starting up from his couch after a dreadful dream in which his murdered victims bid him 'Despair and die,' utters the following soliloquy :—*

RICHARD III.

GIVE me another horse,—bind up my wounds !—
Have mercy, Jesu,—Soft ;—I did but dream.—
O coward conscience ! how dost thou afflict me !—
The lights burn blue.—It is now dead midnight.
Cold fearful[3] drops stand on my trembling flesh.
What do I fear ? myself ? there's none else by ;
Richard loves Richard ; that is, I am I.
O no : alas, I rather hate myself,
For hateful deeds committed by myself.
I am a villain : Yet I lie, I am not.
Fool, of thyself speak well :—Fool, do not flatter.
My conscience hath a thousand several tongues,
And every tongue brings in a several tale,
And every tale condemns me for a villain.
Perjury, perjury, in the highest degree ;
Murder, stern murder, in the direst degree ;
All several sins, all used in each degree,
Throng to the bar, crying all,—Guilty ! guilty !
I shall despair.—There is no creature loves me ;
And, if I die, no soul will pity me :—
Nay, wherefore should they ? since that I myself
Find in myself no pity to myself.
Methought, the souls of all that I had murdered
Came to my tent : and every one did threat
To-morrow's vengeance on the head of Richard.

1. These scenes are abridged from Shakespeare's play of Richard III., act v., scene 3.
2. **Peise**, *i.e.*, *weigh* me down. Probably the same word as 'poise,' from the Latin pondus, a weight.
3. **Fearful**, *i.e.*, *full of fear*. Its usual meaning is, *causing fear*.

WILLIAM CAXTON, THE PRINTER.

LEAVING the fatal field of Bosworth, where a dynasty lies stricken from the throne, let us withdraw for a moment from the heated atmosphere of ambition and strife to the quieter precincts of Westminster Abbey, and, crossing to the north side of the Almonry,[1] enter the low gateway of the grey three-storied house that stands apart from the noisy outside world. All is still within the dimly-lighted passage; but, if you listen attentively, you will hear the low murmur of an aged voice. Follow the sound towards that closed door on the left, open the door, and enter! You find yourself in the midst of a strange scene. Heavily bound books lie all around; a rude printer's press stands near the window; and beside it, is a reading-desk, in front of which is the figure of a stooping, grey-haired man. Draw near to him, and listen to the words that fall in gentle monotone from his withered lips:—

"Oh! ye mighty and pompous lords, winning in the glorious transitory[2] of this unstable life; ye also, ye fierce and mighty knights, so valiant in adventurous deeds of arms; behold! behold! see how this mighty conqueror King Arthur,[3] whom in his human life all the world doubted,[4] yea also the noble Queen Guenever,[5] which sometime[6] sat in her chair adorned with gold, pearls, and precious stones, now lie full low in obscure foss[7] or pit, covered with clods of earth and clay! Behold also this mighty champion, Sir Lancelot,[8] peerless of all knighthood; see now how he lieth grovelling upon the cold mould[9]—now being so feeble and faint, that sometime was so terrible. How, and in what manner, ought ye to be so desirous of worldly honour so dangerous?"

Who is this old man? What page of chivalry and war and death is he reading in this sequestered spot? That page just lifted from the press is from a noble

book, called "The Byrth, Lyfe, and Actes of Kyng Arthur."[10] In this old volume, the reader is led through a strange dreamland, where mighty knights roam over hill and dale in quest 'of adventurous deeds of arms,' jousting one another whenever they meet, and ever rescuing enchanted maidens from dread perils. Note well that book, for it is a famous one; and, with its many passages of exquisite beauty and deep poetic insight, "it has served as a magazine of ideal subjects and suggestions to some of the greatest poets of our nation from Spenser and Milton to our own Tennyson."[11]

The reader is not less worthy of note than the volume, for he is the man who first printed English books,[12] and first set up a printing-press in England.[13] Look well at that good Saxon face, now wrinkled and worn, but still full of sturdy honesty and steadfast purpose; that dim-eyed printer is the noblest figure in the whole of the troubled period which has just closed.

"The Pen is mightier than the Sword." Think what it has done. Go to our busy towns and look into the great libraries and reading rooms where our mechanics find knowledge unrolling to them her 'ample page rich with the spoils of time;'[14] turn to our country homesteads and villages where books carry to the most solitary the story of the work done in the great world of progress; go to parliament where the voice of Liberty is heard proclaiming its rights in tones that, through the press of the nation, reach alike the trembling ear of tyranny which shrinks back at its rebuke, and the sorrow-laden hearts of the oppressed that awaken into new hope and life at the beneficent call—Literature, Liberty, Enlightenment: these are the gifts that have poured forth to England from "the quick forge, and

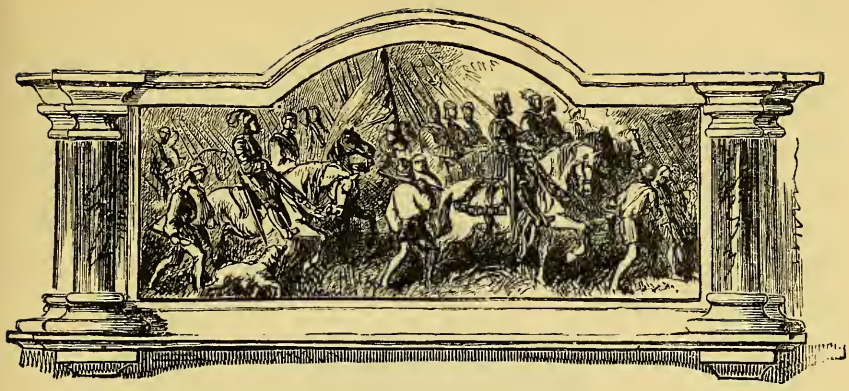
working-house of thought" so busy in the grand head of that humble printer of Westminster Almonry.[15]

Born in Kent, brought up a mercer[16] in London, next head of the English Guild of Merchant Adventurers in Flanders, and then Secretary to the Duchess of Burgundy,[17] this hero of peace did not learn the art of printing till he was nearly sixty years of age. He lived for twenty years after that, eighteen of which were spent in England. During these few years, he printed nearly seventy volumes,[18] most of which were either translated or written by himself. He must have laboured unceasingly; the mere quantity of his work is as much as the most of the ablest men have produced in their whole lifetime.

The first book printed in our language was the *Tales of Troy*,[19] and in a note (which may be called the first English preface), the venerable Caxton says, that "it is not written with pen and ink as other books ben,[20] to the end that all men may have them at once, for all the books of this story were begun in one day and also finished in one day." After this volume comes *The Game of Chess*, the first book printed on English soil. Besides the *Morte D'Arthur*,[21] the busy bookhunter gave to his readers such varied volumes as the famous but then little known *Æneid*[22] *of Virgil* and the *Romances of Jason*.[23] One of the most interesting of his books is one relating "the high and great fates of our Lord, the fates of our blessed Lady, the lives, passions,[24] and miracles of many other saints, and other histories and acts." This volume was so valued that it was called '*The Golden Legend*,'[25] because "like as passeth gold in value all other metals, so this Legend excelleth all other books."

Kings and nobles watched with interest the busy labours of the maker of books; but all the inspiration and all the labour were the results of his own genius and industry. Caxton impresses one as an ideal Saxon. In him we find in perfection that 'composed productiveness'—'clearness, silence, perseverance, unhasting, unresting diligence'—which, warmed by the hidden central fire of genius, has made English Literature and English Industry the greatest in the world's great history.

1. **Almonry,** *i.e.*, the place where *alms* were given out.
2. **Transitory.** Here a noun, meaning a transitory scene, one passing quickly away.
3. **King Arthur,** the British prince. See p. 72.
4. **Doubted,** *dreaded*, regarded as *redoubtable.*
5. **Guenever,** *i.e.*, Guinevere, the beautiful but faithless queen of Arthur.
6. **Sometime,** *i.e.*, *at one time.*
7. **Foss,** a moat or trench, lit., a hole *dug out.*
8. **Sir Lancelot,** the bravest of Arthur's Knights of the Round Table. His passion for the queen led him to betray his noble king. Caxton's book says of him, "Thou wert the meekest man, and the gentlest, that ever eat in hall among ladies; and thou wert the sternest knight to thy mortal foe that ever put spear in rest."
9. The old book makes Lancelot's remorse for his crime against the king very great:—"Evermore day and night he prayed, taking no rest but needfully as nature required; sometimes he slumbered a broken sleep; and always he was lying grovelling upon King Arthur's and Queen Guenever's tomb; and there was no comfort that the bishop, nor Sir Bors, nor none of his own fellows could make him; it availed nothing."
10. So Caxton calls it. Its more usual name is 'The Morte D'Arthur,' *i.e.*, The Death of Arthur. The writer is Sir Thomas Mallory, and it was published by Caxton in 1485 (the very year of Bosworth), when that tireless worker was 74 years of age.
11. This quotation is from 'British Novelists,' by Professor Masson. Spenser's 'Fairy Queen' is full of Mallory's 'Morte D'Arthur;' Milton purposed in his youth to make his great work upon the ancient British king; and Tennyson's 'Idylls of the King' have been inspired by the book printed four hundred years ago by Caxton.
12. The first English book was published at Ghent in 1471. See note 19.
13. Caxton set up his press in a house on the north side of the Almonry in Westminster, in the year 1474 The first book printed in England was **'The Game and Play of Chess.'**
14. The quotation is from 'Gray's Elegy in a Country Churchyard.'
15. Caxton's printing place was known as "*The Reed Pale.*" There is still preserved in Brasenose College, Oxford, a bill printed in large type and inviting customers to come to the Reed Pale. This is the first English advertisement ever printed.
16. **Mercer,** *i.e.*, a general merchant. The great trade in silks and woollen cloths caused this word to acquire its modern meaning.
17. Margaret, sister of Edward IV. She greatly encouraged Caxton, especially in his translation of the 'Tales of Troy.'
18. The number is variously given as 64 and 68.
19. Its full name is 'The Recuyell of the Histories of Troy.' It gathers together all the tales concerning that great town in Asia Minor, and its capture by the Greeks.
20. **Ben,** the old form of the third plural of the verb 'to be.' We now use '*are.*'
21. See note 9 above.
22. **Æneid.** This famous work of the illustrious Roman poet Virgil is the greatest epic poem in the Latin language. It gives an account of the founding of the Roman empire by fugitives from the flames of Troy.
23. **Jason,** a mythical hero of Greece, son of the king of Thessaly. He is said to have led a great expedition of Greeks into the Black Sea to bring back the golden fleece of a ram which had been formerly carried off. With him went the musician Orpheus and many heroes. His ship was called Argo, and the whole adventure is called the Argonautic Expedition. The story was a great favourite with our fathers.
24. **Passions,** *i.e.*, *sufferings.*
25. Published in 1483.



III. THE TUDOR DYNASTY.

A PERIOD OF PERSONAL RULE.

THE Beginning of Modern History.—The beginning of this period may be said to be coincident with those European events which mark the transition from the Middle Ages to modern times. The fall of the eastern Roman Empire and the *capture of Constantinople by the Turks* in 1453,[1] forced the numerous Greek scholars[2] who had made that city their home to spread themselves over the various countries of the west, carrying with them not only their own stores of knowledge but many most valuable manuscripts. At the same time, the *Invention of Printing*[3] made the production of books in great numbers much cheaper and more rapid, and rendered it possible for all who cared for study to form choice libraries of their own.

These two causes combined to produce a *Revival of Learning*[4] all over Europe, and this period really deserves to be called an 'age of scholars.' Not only did England possess many men of great erudition, but the education of women was carried to a height which

it has not reached even in the present day. The gentle Lady Jane Grey delighted in the beautiful dialogues of Plato, and her last hours were spent in reading the Greek Testament; while Queen Mary wrote with perfect ease Latin, French, and Spanish. Her sister Elizabeth surpassed her; for, in addition, she was

LADY JANE GREY AT HER STUDIES.

mistress of Italian, and read more Greek in a day than many a clergyman did of Latin in a week.

The natural consequence of this spread of education was a *splendid outburst of literary fervour*, which culminated in what is known as the Elizabethan period, when

such men as Shakespeare and Spenser rendered illustrious the 'bead-roll' of England's men of genius. Akin to this last effect, was the uprising of a spirit of independent investigation in science and theology, which manifested itself in the proposed *Reformation of Religion* and in the birth of the modern Inductive or Baconian Philosophy.

Finally, the general use of the *Mariners' Compass*[5] gave a powerful impetus to naval enterprise throughout Europe; and the discovery of the West Indies by Columbus in 1492, of the mainland of America by Cabot in 1497, of the passage round the Cape of Good Hope by Vasco di Gama in 1498, and of the Pacific Ocean by Magellan in 1520, inaugurated the marvellous commercial activity and universal spirit of colonisation, which are the most notable features of our modern life.

General Character of the Government under the Tudors.—The gradual *Introduction of Gunpowder*[6] had completely revolutionised the art of war; and, by giving the death-blow to the already lessened importance of the steel-clad knight, had completed the destruction of the decaying feudal system. The government of the Tudors is not at all like the mediæval rule of our warlike Richards and Edwards surrounded by their powerful barons, but the sway of *a personal sovereign* unchecked by a martial aristocracy and in many respects most arbitrary in its character.

It is true that in theory the English monarchy was a limited one, and the constitution had established *five* safeguards of liberty and checks upon any despotic exercise of power. These are so important that they should be kept clearly in mind from the very beginning of the period.

Three of these had reference to *personal freedom*. No man could be imprisoned except by a legal warrant specifying his offence, and when imprisoned the accused had to be brought to speedy trial.[7] The surpassing value of this principle will be evident when it is remembered that in France hundreds were consigned to a *life-long captivity by the simple 'order of the king,' without any form of trial whatever.*

The second of these precious privileges, the priceless birthright of every Englishman, declared that the guilt or innocence of any accused person was to be determined in *open court by a jury* of twelve fellow-subjects.[8] Kings did after this endeavour to interfere with Trial by Jury; but their doing so is in itself a strong proof of the importance of this inalienable right of the people.

The third of these limitations of the royal prerogative declared that any servant of the king who *violated the personal liberty of a subject could be sued for damages* before a jury; and it was further settled that the fact that he had been obeying the king's order was no defence.

The fourth and fifth of these constitutional principles were that *no new law could be enacted, nor tax levied, without the consent of Parliament.* Many attempts were made to evade these restraints upon kingly power by *royal proclamations* instead of laws, and by claiming *benevolences* or gifts instead of taxes. But such illegal acts only illustrate more clearly the value and security of these privileges of the Parliament and people of England.

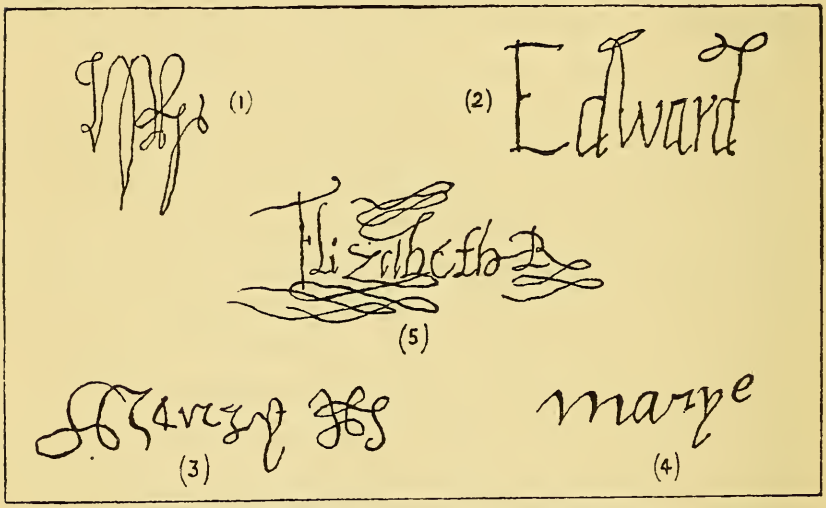
In spite of these safeguards, the rule of the Tudors was far more arbitrary than that of their predecessors or successors; and we shall now inquire into the causes which rendered their power almost absolute.

Causes of the Arbitrary Nature of Tudor Rule.—Tyrannies are usually oppressive to the mass of the people and have to be supported by the swords of a devoted army. *Neither of these was the case under the Tudors.* There was no standing army in England until the reign of Charles II.,[9] sixty years after the close of this period, so that these 'despotic' monarchs had absolutely no physical force at their command.

Again, the absolutism of the Tudors was of a somewhat peculiar character. Their power was greatest in the circle immediately about their persons, and they could send their chief enemies to the block without a single opposing voice being raised; we miss the resolute opposition which even the greatest of the Plantagenets met with from their powerful barons; but *the mass of the people were free both in spirit and in fact.* When Henry VIII., the most arbitrary of the Tudors, imposed a tax without the consent of the Parliament, the *Commons* rebelled and forced him publicly to express his regret for having broken the law. In a word, with the exception of about eighty peers, all the inhabitants of our country, from the sons of these nobles to the poorest peasants and labourers, were, in the eyes of the law, *freemen, citizens, and equals.*

The high-handed character of the Tudor rule was, in the first place, owing to *the personal character of the monarchs.* The three great sovereigns of the dynasty—Henry VII., Henry VIII., and Elizabeth—were all persons of strong individuality, firm will, and cool head. The first two of these qualities gave them marked influence over all who came into personal contact with them; and there is no fact more striking than the almost slavish submission with which distinguished English warriors, world-renowned navigators, great statesmen,

and illustrious writers, treated these monarchs. The last of these characteristics enabled them to know exactly how far they could safely go, and gave them the self-control to stop and retrace their steps whenever they had offended the great body of their people.



SIGNATURES OF THE TUDOR SOVEREIGNS.

1. HENRY VII. 2. EDWARD VI. 3. HENRY VIII. 4. MARY. 5. ELIZABETH.

In the second place, the Tudor monarchs were enabled to act as they did from *the subserviency of their nobles and Parliament*. The nation had just emerged from a long civil war; many of the landholders were 'new men' who had sprung up during that time of turmoil, and who depended for security in possession of their estates [10] upon the stability of the dynasty. The merchant class, too, felt that prosperity required above all things *a settled government*, even although its power might be more absolute and arbitrary than their fathers would have submitted to.

This spirit of acquiescence in acts which were unconstitutional allowed certain courts, especially that called *the Star Chamber*, to be used as engines of tyranny—giv-

ing to royal proclamations all the force of laws, and "holding for honourable that which pleased, and for just that which profited."

After the Reformation, the monarchs found a new ally in *the state of religious parties* in the country. The Protestant section of the people felt that the safety of their religion was for the time being far more important than mere civil liberty, and that it depended upon the continuance of Tudor rule. Accordingly, they were content to bear any amount of personal oppression rather than by rebellion endanger their new faith.

Another element which greatly favoured absolute rule was *the absence of the means of rapid communication.* Acts of oppression might be perpetrated in different localities, and yet would not be heard of for weeks in the more distant parts of the country.[11] This rendered combined action very difficult; and to it we may add, *the want of that political enlightenment* which sees in any infringement of the rights of *one* individual a danger to the liberties of *the whole people*, that in the struggle for freedom it must be, "Each for all, and all for each;" that we must strive not only to guard our rights, but to "defend one another."

1. See note p. 54, note 1.
2. The language spoken in the Eastern Roman Empire was Greek, not Latin.
3. See frontispiece.
4. Called the *Renaissance* or 'new birth.'
5. The Mariners' Compass was known to the Chinese long before the time of Christ. It began to be generally used by sailors in the Mediterranean in 1310, when for the first time a card with the points marked upon it was attached to the needle.
6. Like printing and the mariners' compass, gunpowder had been long known to the Chinese; and its properties were made known in England by Roger Bacon (1214-92), but it was not till the 15th century that it began to be of any importance in war.
7. This right was strictly defined by the famous *Habeas Corpus Act* passed in the reign of Charles II. in 1679.
8. Juries were finally protected from interference at the Revolution of 1688.
9. "Except the yeomen of the guard, fifty in number, and the common servants of the king's household, there was not, *in time of peace*, an armed man receiving pay throughout England."
10. There would be two claimants for most of the estates—a Yorkist one in exile or poverty, and a Lancastrian one in possession.
11. In feudal times it merely required an agreement between a few nobles to create a rebellion, but now an insurrection could scarcely take place without a really general movement among the masses of the people.

HENRY VII.—THE FIRST OF THE TUDORS. 1485–1509.

HENRY VII.

HENRY'S Character and Title to the Throne.—The new king, the last representative of the House of Lancaster, was a man of great foresight, and had the wisdom (characteristic of his dynasty) to use moderately a power which he might have made very oppressive. Everything seemed to promise a reign of extraordinary prosperity. The barons, so long the rivals of the crown, had been enfeebled by the recent wars; and the commons had not yet learned to assert their rights in the absence of their ancient leaders. The whole nation, too, was tired of tumult and ready to acquiesce in any government which was able to enforce the law and ensure order, while Henry's promised marriage with the heiress of the rival dynasty was fitted finally to reconcile the hostile parties.

Unfortunately, Henry was swayed by two master-passions, which at times broke beyond the control of his habitual prudence and plunged the country into a series of petty insurrections. The first of these was inordinate love of money, while the second was undying hatred of all who opposed his claim to the throne; and one of the most marked features in this reign is the pertinacity

with which he pursued his rivals and foes even to the scaffold, and the merciless avarice with which he extorted from the unhappy Yorkists their last remaining possessions.

TABLE SHOWING THE DESCENT OF HENRY VII.

EDWARD III.
|
JOHN OF GAUNT
=KATHERINE SWINFORD.
|
JOHN BEAUFORT, Earl of Somerset.
|
JOHN, Duke of Somerset.
|
MARGARET BEAUFORT=EDMUND TUDOR,
Earl of Richmond.
|
HENRY VII. =ELIZABETH OF YORK.

Henry's title to the throne was very defective. He had not a legal right even to the inferior claims of the Lancastrian dynasty, for he was descended from an illegitimate son of John of Gaunt. His family had indeed been accorded the rights of legitimacy,[1] but the Act doing so had expressly excluded them from the throne.

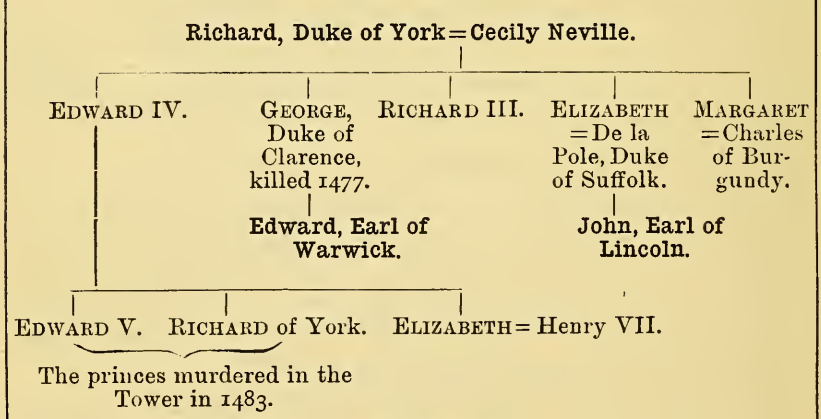
A better title could have been founded upon his *marriage* with Elizabeth of York, but his inveterate jealousy of all rival claims caused him to look with disfavour upon any reference to the descent of his queen.

There are indications that he would have preferred to assert the right of *conquest;* but his prudence warned him that the country would never have tolerated so odious a pretext, and reminded him that even William of Normandy had founded his claim, not upon his right as a conqueror,[2] but upon the will of the Confessor. Henry was accordingly forced to rest upon the *parlia-*

mentary title; but he procured a papal bull which distinctly sets forth his fourfold claim, by *descent*, by *marriage*, by *conquest*, and by *parliamentary enactment*.

Dangers Threatening the Throne of Henry.—Henry's deep hatred and restless suspicion of the Yorkists led him to keep back the coronation of his queen and prevented him from pursuing a wise policy of conciliation and moderation. This was very foolish, for, as will be seen from the accompanying table, he had more than one enemy to fear.

TABLE SHOWING THE CHIEF RIVALS OF HENRY VII.


Richard, Duke of York = Cecily Neville.
Edward IV.
George, Duke of Clarence, killed 1477.
Richard III.
Elizabeth = De la Pole, Duke of Suffolk.
Margaret = Charles of Burgundy.
Edward, Earl of Warwick.
John, Earl of Lincoln.
Edward V.
Richard of York.
Elizabeth = Henry VII.
The princes murdered in the Tower in 1483.

The late king, Richard III., had named his nephew, the *Earl of Lincoln*, as his successor; and, although Henry professed to treat that nobleman with contempt, he was a dangerous rival. A still more formidable claim was that of the young *Earl of Warwick*.[3] This unfortunate youth had been kept in perpetual imprisonment from childhood, and confinement had quite destroyed his intellect, but the Yorkists were ready to rally round his name. Last of all, the dowager *Duchess of Burgundy*,

sister of Richard III. and of Edward IV., a princess who had 'the spirit of a man and the malice of a woman,' made it the chief purpose of her life to overthrow the hated Tudors, and replace one of her own dynasty upon the throne.

In 1486, Henry recalled all the grants of crown lands which had been made since the beginning of the Wars of the Roses. As these had been almost exclusively given to supporters of the house of York, the discontented and impoverished leaders of that party entered upon a series of desperate rebellions against their hated oppressor.

The first of these is known as *Lord Lovell's Rebellion.* It took place in 1486, while the king was making a royal progress through the kingdom. The rebels intended to seize the king as he entered the city of York, but were easily dispersed. Their leader escaped to Burgundy, and remained there until he returned to join a more formidable attack upon the throne.

The second insurrection of the Yorkists is associated with the *imposture of Lambert Simnel.* This youth, the son of a carpenter of Oxford, had been trained by a man named Symmonds to personate the young Earl of Warwick—the motive being that Henry might be kept from putting the real earl to death while the rebellion was in progress.

The impostor had wonderful success. He was received most cordially in Ireland, recognised as king by the Lord Deputy, and proclaimed in Dublin as Edward VI. Nor was that all; for Lord Lovell, the Earl of Lincoln, and many other exiles hurried over from Burgundy, bringing with them 2000 veteran troops, under the command of a distinguished general, Martin Schwartz.

Henry, meanwhile, had recognised the imprudence of his former policy. He accordingly proclaimed a general amnesty,[4] and shortly afterwards had the queen publicly crowned. He also caused the true Earl of Warwick to be exhibited to the people.

The last scene of the rising quickly followed. The insurgents landed in Lancashire; and, marching across the centre of England, met the king's forces at *Stoke*,[5] in Nottinghamshire. There they were totally defeated and their leaders slain. Lord Lovell escaped, and was never seen alive again. Some centuries later, his remains were found in a secret chamber in one of his mansions, where he had concealed himself for safety and been forgotten. Simnel was treated with good-natured ridicule and made a turnspit in the royal kitchen, which office he found much more suited to his tastes than the fatigues of a campaign and the dangers of a throne.

1. In the reign of Richard II.
2. The title 'Conqueror' used by William was a feudal term, signifying one who brought estates into any family; it has no reference to *victory* or *conquest* in our modern sense.
3. He was then 15 years of age.
4. **Amnesty**, pardon of political offenders.
5. June 16th, 1487.

THE FIRST OF THE TUDORS—*continued.*

THE Rising of Perkin Warbeck.—The third and greatest of these risings did not take place for about five years. In the beginning of the year 1492, a young man of most distinguished bearing made his appearance in Ireland, and declared himself to be Richard of York, the younger of the two princes supposed to have been murdered in the Tower.

The career of this 'impostor' was even more won-

derful than that of Simnel. After leaving Ireland, where the memory of the former rebellion prevented the people from joining him, he was successively received as a royal personage in the three courts of France, Burgundy, and Scotland. The Duchess Margaret, as tireless an enemy of the Tudors as ever, greeted him as her nephew and called him "The White Rose of England." In Scotland he was welcomed with equal warmth by the chivalrous James IV.; and was there married to the noble Lady Catherine Gordon, who followed him faithfully in all his subsequent wanderings.[1]

Henry displayed the utmost anxiety to drive him from every place of refuge. In 1492, he made a sudden peace with Charles VIII. of France, in order that his enemy might be expelled from that country. Then he brought the people of Burgundy [2] to terms by removing the English wool mart from Antwerp to Calais. While injuring the English trade, this almost destroyed that of the Flemings, and led the Duke of Burgundy to agree to a treaty by which he promised not to permit the Dowager Duchess again to harbour the enemies of Henry. Finally, the prudent Tudor forgave the Scotch king for two invasions of the north of England, and arranged a marriage between James and his daughter Margaret.[3]

Warbeck himself did little to merit the support he so readily received. He had, indeed, landed in Kent,[4] but had shown neither courage nor ability. One hundred and sixty-nine of his followers were captured, and immediately hanged upon the beach. He had also made a second attempt in Ireland; but his final effort was made in Cornwall,[5] where a rising had taken place against Henry's taxation. At Bodmin, he was proclaimed as Richard IV., and was followed to Exeter by

about 6000 men. His heart, however, failed him; and he fled for refuge to Beaulieu Abbey, leaving his followers to be cut to pieces by the royal troops.[6]

When brought to London, he was at first treated with apparent contempt, and allowed to walk about the city. But having attempted to escape, he was compelled to read a confession of his imposture, and, two months afterwards, was executed at Tyburn.[7]

Three circumstances make us almost doubt whether he was an impostor. The first of these is the extraordinary trouble Henry took to subdue the rebellion; this he would hardly have done had he been certain that Warbeck was merely a pretender. The second is, the uniform respect with which Warbeck was received in the most distinguished courts of Europe; and the third is, that although constantly watched by the spies of the king, he never showed the slightest indication that he was 'playing a part.'

The General Policy of Henry.—Henry's *foreign policy* was marked by hostility towards France and friendship towards Spain. The rapid recovery of the former country from the English invasions, and the consolidation of her various provinces, had made the surrounding countries regard her with dread.[8] This feeling had, in the earlier years of the reign, led Henry to engage in a war with her concerning Brittany, but he had, as has been said, made a rapid peace[9] after receiving liberal supplies from his Parliament.

In his later years, Henry completed his union with Spain by the marriage of his son Arthur, Prince of Wales, to Catherine of Aragon, daughter of Ferdinand, the Spanish king.[10] When Arthur died, a few months after the marriage, Henry and Ferdinand obtained the

Papal permission for marrying Catherine to her dead husband's brother Henry.[11] The motive of the English king was to retain the dowry of 200,000 crowns, that of the Spaniard was to retain the English alliance against France.

THE LANDING OF COLUMBUS IN THE NEW WORLD.

In his *home policy*, Henry sought to maintain order, and above all to amass wealth. To strengthen his central authority, he conferred extraordinary powers upon a court called the *Court of the Star Chamber*, whose chief duty at this time was the suppression of those

great bodies of *maintainers*[12] who had rendered the barons so formidable.

Every device was made use of to gratify the king's avarice. Forgotten statutes were dragged to light, that unfortunate transgressors might be heavily *fined*; while, since general taxes provoked popular discontent, *benevolences* and *loans*[13] were exacted from the wealthy.

One more incident calls for notice ere we leave this reign. Henry's commercial instincts led him to encourage maritime enterprise; and Columbus,[14] the great discoverer of the New World, had opened up communications with him, when the king of Spain at last consented to furnish the illustrious navigator with a fleet. It was the English king, however, who sent out the expeditions of the Cabots,[15] which resulted in the *first discovery* of the *mainland* of America.

Henry died of consumption in his palace of Richmond in the spring of the year 1509.

1. The Scottish Court was at this time a very cultivated one, including the famous poets, Dunbar and Gavin Douglas.
2. In 1494, a plot was discovered in favour of Warbeck, and many English gentlemen were executed. Among these was the wealthy Sir William Stanley, who had saved Henry's life at Bosworth.
3. The marriage was completed in 1502.
4. 1494. 5. 1497.
6. This took place at Taunton, 1497.
7. August 23d, 1499. While this adventurer had been at the court of Burgundy, Henry sent over emissaries to find out who he really was. They declared that he was the son of a merchant of Tournay, and had been trained by the Duchess of Burgundy for the part which he had to play.
8. It is at this time, that the maintenance of the Balance of Power (*i.e.*, the prevention of any one state from rising to such a degree of power, as to endanger the general liberty) became a matter of European policy.
9. The war ended in 1492, during Warbeck's rising.
10. Ferdinand refused to agree to this marriage so long as the Earl of Warwick lived; and accordingly Henry consigned the unhappy Plantagenet to the block. Long afterwards, when Catherine of Aragon was unjustly put away by her husband, she exclaimed, "The divorce is a judgment of God, for that my former marriage was made in blood."
11. Catherine and Henry were married in 1502, she being 18 years of age, he 12.
12. See p. 129.
13. A *benevolence* was a free gift; *loans* differed only in name, for they were seldom repaid. Archbishop Morton invented a dilemma, called Morton's fork. Those who lived extravagantly were asked to pay because they spent so much; those who lived economically because they saved so much.
14. **Columbus** was a Genoese. His voyage took place in 1492.
15. **John Cabot** and his son Sebastian were Venetians. They discovered Newfoundland, and sailed along coast from Labrador to Virginia in 1497.

HENRY VIII.—THE RIVAL ROSES INTERTWINED.[1]

HENRY VIII.

CHARACTER and Prospects of the Young King.—No prospects could have been brighter than those of the young Henry. In his person, the claims of the rival Roses were at last combined; and, whatever objections might have been made against the title of his father, none could deny that he was the 'next and sole heir to the blood royal of this realm.'

The whole nation welcomed the young and frank-mannered prince as promising a delightful change after the cold, avaricious, and stern rule of his predecessor. And truly, Henry in his youth was fitted to call forth the enthusiastic loyalty of a people. He was handsome and strong in person, apparently most generous in disposition, and possessed of excellent intellectual powers. We are told that people came to see him playing at bowls for the sake of his beauty, and that he was "as handsome as nature could make him;" that he was an admirable horseman and wrestler, and that he not only knew French, Latin, and Spanish, but was an excellent musician and composer. It was not till later in life that he unhappily displayed those vices and passions which have made him detested by posterity.

The earlier acts of this winning young king were

fitted to increase his popularity. He completed his marriage with Catherine of Aragon and thus rendered more secure the alliance with Spain,[2] retained the more popular members of his father's council, and sacrificed to the indignation of the people Empson and Dudley —the two most hated of his father's financial agents. These men had only been guilty of extortion, but were condemned on a false charge of treason.

Last of all, the new monarch had inherited a full treasury, and was thus able to gratify his personal inclination without imposing taxes upon the people.

Henry's Foreign Policy.—Henry had all a young man's ambition after military renown. His flatterers reminded him of the glorious achievements of the Black Prince and Henry V.; and he plunged into European politics, dreaming of victories as illustrious as Crecy, Poitiers, and Agincourt.

But, at the beginning of his reign, the young English king had to deal with sovereigns much more experienced and skilful than himself, so that he became the tool of nearly every one of them in turn. The papal throne was occupied by the warlike Pope Julius II., France was governed by Louis XII., Spain by the astute Ferdinand, and Germany by the Emperor Maximilian.

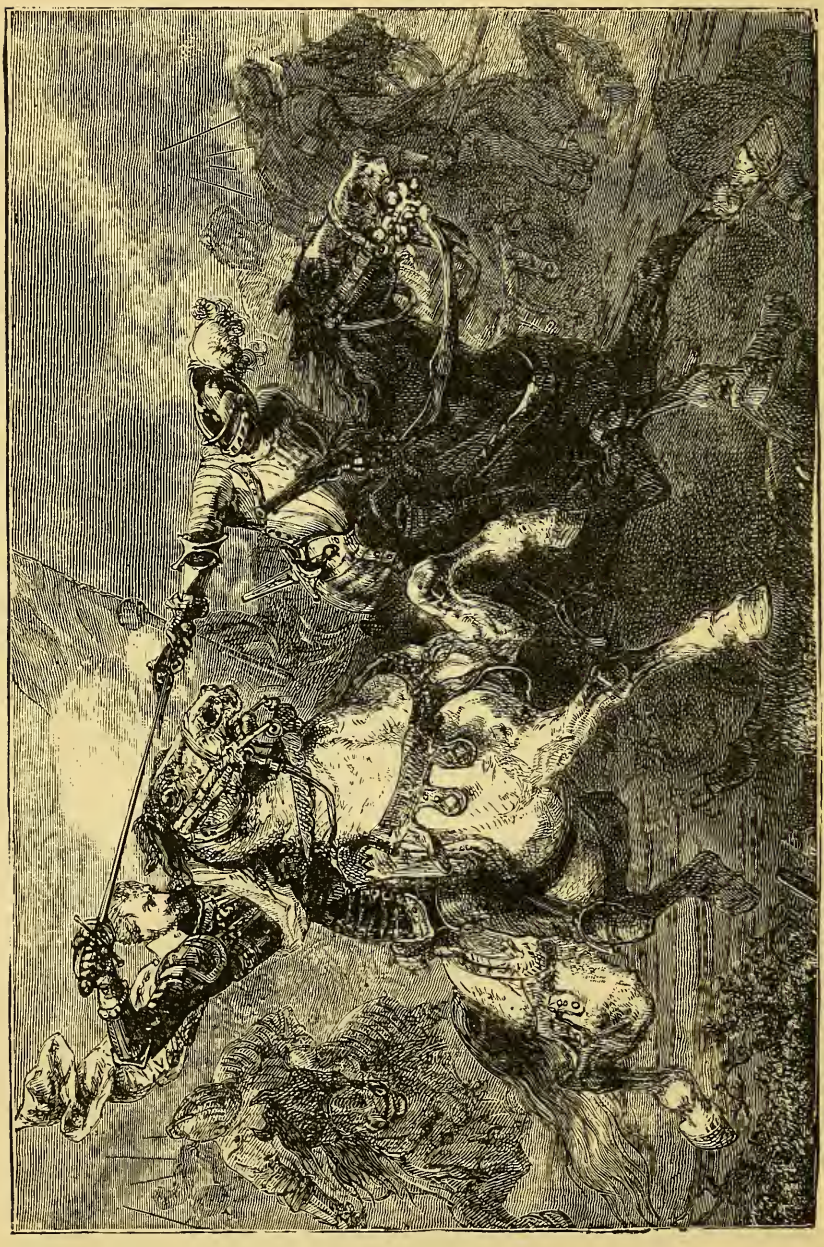
Interest at first centred upon Italy, where the Venetian republic had conquered large portions of the mainland, and the French had seized Milan.[3] Now, the Pope had determined to check the encroachments of Venice,[4] and to drive the foreigner out of Italy. It was in the endeavour to attain the latter purpose that he sought the aid of Henry, along with both the Spanish king and the German emperor. This alliance was auspiciously called the Holy League.

Henry's motives in entering into this war were somewhat complex. The military spirit referred to was naturally directed against France by the long traditions of 'The Hundred Years' War' with that country. Along with a section of his council, he was also influenced by the Italian doctrine of the Balance of Power,[5] which was violated by French predominance in Italy. It is interesting to notice that, upon the policy of this war, there occurred "probably the earliest debate in an English council on the oft-discussed question whether Great Britain should aim at continental dominion, or confine her ambition to maritime greatness and colonial empire." It is in the latter direction that the country has won its most enduring conquests, and the views of its advocates have been finely expressed by one of her greatest poets[6]:—

> "So the wide waters, open to the power,
> The will, the instincts, and appointed needs
> Of Britain, do invite her to cast off
> Her swarms, and in succession send them forth,
> Bound to establish new communities
> On every shore whose aspect favours hope
> Or bold adventure; promising to skill
> And perseverance their deserved reward."

The War with France, 1512.—Henry, however, decided upon a military policy. The history of the war may be told in a few words. In the first year, the Pope obtained his desire, for the French had to evacuate his beloved Italy. Ferdinand of Spain had long coveted Navarre, which at this time belonged to France. By promising the recovery of the English province of Guienne, he persuaded Henry to send an army to the Pyrences; and, while the French troops were

occupied in watching the English forces, he quietly



THE BATTLE OF THE SPURS.

effected his purpose by overrunning Navarre. The

soldiers, disgusted with their inactivity and decimated by disease, at last forced their leaders to lead them home.

In the following year, Henry led an army of 25,000 men into the north of France. He was this time joined by the Emperor Maximilian with a body of horse. The combined forces laid siege to the town of *Terouenne*.

The garrison was sore pressed by want of food and ammunition. The town was once, indeed, revictualled by a gallant rush of 800 horsemen, each of whom carried across his saddle a sack of powder and a piece of bacon. They dashed through the English lines, threw down their burdens at the gate of the city, and then effected their retreat.

A second attempt was made to relieve the beleaguered fortress, when an army of 10,000 men, led by the French king himself, came to the rescue. Strange to say, although these troops were veterans from Italy, they were, when charged by the English mounted archers, seized with a sudden panic, and fled in the wildest confusion. Their officers, who vainly sought to check the disgraceful flight, were nearly all captured. This rout was known as the *Battle of the Spurs*, because the fugitives used their heels much more than their swords.

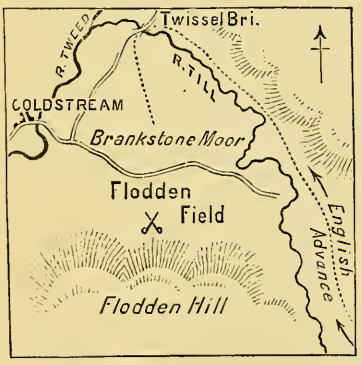
After this, Henry found himself deserted by all his allies. Maximilian had now obtained Milan, and was satisfied, as Ferdinand and Pope Julius had been before.

The 'Balance of Power,' however, had been preserved; and, to cement the new peace, Henry's sister Mary, a beautiful girl of sixteen, was married to the prematurely-old Louis.[7] The aged bridegroom died in a few months, and his young widow married her former lover, Charles Brandon, duke of Suffolk. The new King of France was a gallant and warlike young prince, Francis I.[8]

One year later, a youthful monarch likewise succeeded to the throne of Spain—the renowned Charles V.

Francis I. managed to restore French influence in Italy; but the three young kings at last entered into a close alliance, binding themselves to oppose any disturbance of the Balance of Power, even although one of themselves should be the aggressor.[9] This event closes the foreign policy of the first part of Henry's reign.

The Battle of Flodden, 1513.—As has been already said, the Scots had for many generations kept up a close alliance with France. Accordingly, their king, James IV., made Henry's war with Louis the occasion for demanding an immediate answer to certain complaints he had urged[10] against his royal brother-in-law.[11] That high-spirited monarch replied with scorn.



The Scottish king, therefore, declared war, and led an army across the Border. After capturing several castles, the invaders encamped on an impregnable position on Flodden Hill, near the left bank of the little river Till;[12] and an English army, under the Earl of Surrey, hurried north to attack them.

James IV., with a foolish but romantic chivalry, allowed his enemy to march unattacked through the narrow pass by the side of the Till, and then to cross that river by a bridge which his artillery could have rendered impassable.

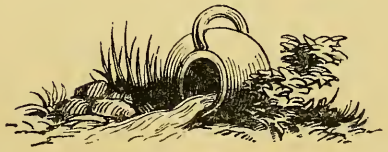
The Scots were forced by this movement of their enemy to leave their strong position and fight upon the

plain. The issue was decided in less than an hour. The English right and centre were nearly defeated; but their left (consisting of archers from Lancashire and Cheshire led by Sir Edward Stanley) defeated the Highlanders opposed to them, and then, attacking the Scottish centre from the rear, gained a complete victory.

The last struggle of the Scots took place round the body of their wounded and dying king. Scott's description of this scene of heroism and death is one of the grandest battle-pieces in our language.

Ere darkness 'closed her wing o'er the thin host,' the Scottish monarch, the flower of his nobility, and the greater portion of his gallant army, had fallen on 'Flodden's fatal field.' The defeat was lamented over the whole of Scotland as hardly less disastrous than Bannockburn had been glorious; and more than two hundred and fifty years afterwards the beautiful song, 'The Flowers of the Forest,' bewailed the loss of the Border youth on that day of 'strife and carnage.'

1. Henry reigned from 1509 to 1547. He was born in 1491, so that he was eighteen years of age at the beginning of his reign.
2. The Spanish alliance was at this time very popular as a safeguard against the undue increase of French power.
3. Spain had rightful possession of Naples.
4. Called the League of Cambrai.
5. Balance of Power. See note 8, p. 190.
6. Wordsworth, in 'The Excursion,' Book IX.
7. Louis was 53, but much broken in health.
8. Louis XII. died in 1515, Ferdinand in 1516.
9. That is, Henry of England, Francis of France, and Charles of Spain. The nominal cause was the threatened advance of the Turks into Central Europe.
10. Henry VIII. had never given up the jewels which Henry VII. had left by will to his daughter Margaret of Scotland. Satisfaction was also demanded for the execution of the Scottish Admiral, Sir Andrew Barton, upon a charge of piracy.
11. James IV. had been married to Margaret, daughter of Henry VII. From this marriage resulted the union of the crowns of Scotland and England.
12. **Till**, a small Northumbrian stream, which falls into the Tweed below Coldstream.



THE LAST OF THE GREAT ECCLESIASTICAL STATESMEN[1] (1515–1530).

WOLSEY.

WOLSEY: his Rise, Character, and Policy.—This great minister swayed the destinies of England for nearly fifteen years. He was born of humble parents in the city of Ipswich. His enemies were more exact in their account of him:[2]—

"Begat by butchers, but by bishops bred,
How haughtily his highness holds his head."

Whatever may have been his parentage, he received the best education that the times could give; and at the University of Oxford, he showed such talent and took his degree at so early an age that he was known as the "Boy Bachelor."[3]

He had attracted the notice of Henry VII. by the ability with which he managed certain delicate negotiations, and had been recommended by that king to his son as almoner.[4] He still more completely gained the confidence of his new patron, who showered honours[5] upon him, till his revenues[6] equalled those of the Crown itself; and he became by far the most powerful subject in the realm. At last, he was made Archbishop of York and Chancellor; while Pope Leo created him a Cardinal, and appointed him his Legate.

It is very difficult to form a just estimate of the *character* of this wonderful man. In the first place, he owed his lofty position to his remarkable ability and untiring energy. By these, he was able to relieve Henry of the most troublesome of his duties, and leave him at liberty to indulge in the gorgeous ceremonial in which he especially delighted.[7] Further, Wolsey's tastes exactly suited those of the king. His scholarship[8] and literary skill appealed to the intellectual side of Henry's character, while his magnificence of life[9] accorded well with that monarch's splendid extravagance.

On the other hand, his enemies could point with too much justice to his lofty ambition, his 'ever ranking himself with princes,' to his unbounded desire for wealth, and to the heartlessness with which he swept from his path *all* who stood in his way to power.

Our great dramatist gives the following account of him:—

> "This cardinal,
> Though from an humble stock, undoubtedly
> Was fashioned to much honour. From his cradle
> He was a scholar, and a ripe and good one;
> Exceeding wise, fair spoken, and persuading:
> Lofty and sour to them that loved him not;
> But to those men that sought him, sweet as summer.
> And though he were unsatisfied in getting,
> (Which was a sin), yet in bestowing, madam,
> He was most princely."[10]

The *policy* of this all-powerful statesman was threefold. In the first place, he had unbounded personal ambition. He was not covetous; for though he was never satisfied 'in getting,' he used his great wealth but to increase his influence. Not content with almost

regal power in England, he aimed at the Popedom itself, and did not hesitate to subordinate the interests of the whole nation to that end.

His admirers declared that this personal motive was secondary to his love for the Church itself, and his eagerness to promote her welfare. They say that he saw clearly the existence of abuses which required reformation; and that his resolute pursuit of wealth, magnificence, and power, was only to enable him so to guide the affairs of England and of Europe that 'reform should come from within the Church, not from without.'

As a minister of Henry, he consistently upheld the arbitrary exercise of kingly power. The lessons of the long civil war may have impressed upon him the paramount necessity of law and order. Accordingly, he sought by every means to weaken the power of the nobility who had formerly caused such anarchy; and, on the other hand, he looked upon the Commons as requiring to be led rather than consulted about the affairs of state.[11] He was thus hated both by peers and people.

Foreign Affairs during the Ministry of Wolsey.—As has been already said, three young sovereigns[12] now occupied the thrones of England, France, and Spain. In 1519, the emperor of Germany died; and these three monarchs became rivals for the imperial crown.[13] Charles of Spain won the coveted honour, and it was soon evident that war would take place between him and Francis. Henry's alliance was eagerly sought by both of these princes; for his position and the military renown of his people enabled him to hold the 'balance of power.' Unfortunately, Wolsey's ambition and his own vanity prevented him from winning any lasting benefit from these advantages.

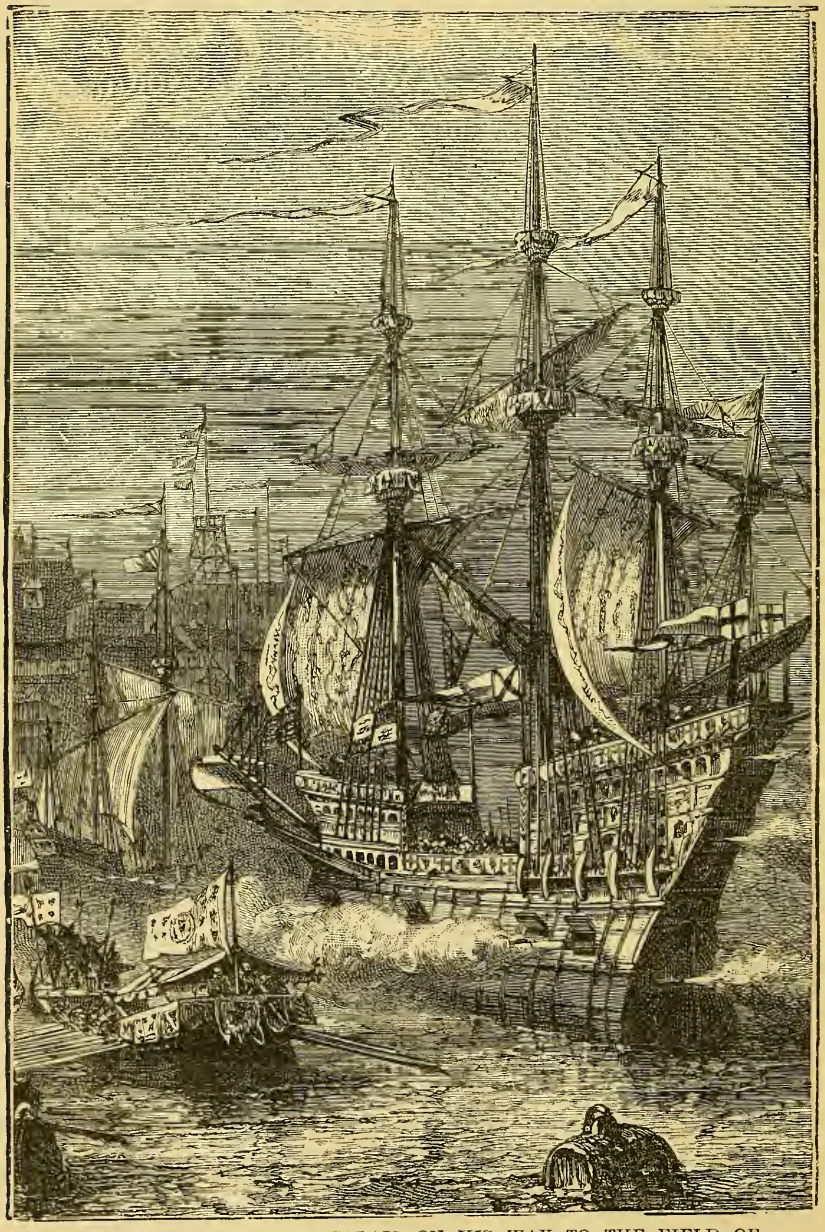
Francis, who was of a frank and chivalrous disposition, proposed an interview with Henry. The place appointed was a level plain on neutral territory near Calais,[14] and the followers of both sovereigns determined to make the meeting a scene of unparalleled magnificence. The more astute Charles was, however, beforehand with his rival. He had already won over Wolsey by promising to use all his influence to procure that minister's election to the wished-for Popedom. Further, he came over to England in person, met Henry at Canterbury, and obtained a promise from that monarch to meet him after the conference with Francis was over.[15]

Henry then went over to Calais to meet the gallant King of France. Both were accompanied by their nobles, and the series of gorgeous displays won for the conference the name of *The Field of the Cloth of Gold*.[16] It may be regarded as the expiring flicker of the torch of chivalry which had shed so magnificent a light over the closing scenes of mediæval life.

The two kings were 'suns of glory, two lights of men equal in lustre.'[17] To-day, the French appeared all glittering in gold; to-morrow, the English came forth so brilliantly attired that every man appeared 'like a mine.' The two queens, with the fair ladies of their courts, presided over the gay gallantry of the scene; and brilliant tournaments were added to other less warlike pageants. No permanent results followed from this extravagant and most theatrical display, except, perhaps, that many of the nobility of both realms were ruined by the expense into which a frenzied spirit of ostentation and rivalry had hurried them.

In pursuance of his minister's policy, Henry formed a close alliance with Charles, and several fruitless in-

vasions of France took place.[18] Meanwhile, Wolsey had



LANDING OF HENRY AT CALAIS ON HIS WAY TO THE FIELD OF THE CLOTH OF GOLD.

been *twice* disappointed in the matter of the Popedom, and his enthusiasm for the war became lukewarm.[19] It was not possible to withdraw hastily; but at last the total defeat of Francis, in 1525, enabled him to appeal to the old argument of the 'Balance of Power.' Accordingly, although war was not declared with Spain till three years later, an alliance was gradually made with France.

To strengthen this union, a marriage was proposed between the French king and the young princess Mary.[20] During the negotiations, questions were put with regard to the legality of Henry's marriage with Catherine, and consequently as to the legitimacy of their offspring. This, however, will be better considered in connection with one of the most disgraceful proceedings in our country's annals—the divorce of the virtuous princess who had for nearly twenty years been Queen of England.

1. **Ecclesiastical statesmen.** Wolsey recalls *Dunstan* in Saxon times, and *Thomas à Becket* in those of the first Plantagenet.
2. His enemies said that he was the son of a butcher or grazier. This was probably untrue.
3. **Bachelor,** the first degree conferred upon a student at the universities after having passed his examinations is that of Bachelor of Arts (or B.A.), the second is that of Master of Arts (or M.A.).
4. **Almoner,** distributer of *alms*.
5. **Honours.** When Tournay was taken (see p. 195), he was made its Bishop. He was also made Bishop of Bath; this he exchanged for the richer See of Durham, and that for the still richer one of Winchester. He held many other lucrative posts.
6. **Revenues.** In addition to his enormous English revenues, he had large yearly payments from both Francis of France and Charles of Spain.
7. That is, in his earlier years; in his later years, he gave most of his time to the transaction of public business.
8. At Oxford, he endowed seven lectureships and founded the college of Christ's Church. In connection with the latter, he created a college at his native Ipswich; this one "fell with him."
9. Wolsey is said to have kept up a train of 800 persons—many of them nobles, knights, and gentlemen. He built the splendid palace of Hampton Court, and then presented it as a gift to his gratified sovereign.
10. From the play of Henry VIII., Act iv. Sc. ii.
11. There was no parliament from 1515 to 1523.
12. See p. 196.
13. The Emperor of Germany was *elected* by the minor potentates or *electors* of Germany.
14. Between Guisnes and Ardres.
15. The promise was kept. The meeting took place at Gravelines near Calais, immediately after the Field of the Cloth of Gold.
16. Field of the Cloth of Gold took place in 1520.
17. For a vivid description of the meeting see Shakespeare's Henry VIII., Act i. Sc. 1.
18. The most important were in 1522 and 1523.
19. Leo X. died in 1522. Adrian VI. was then elected. He in turn died in 1523, and was succeeded by Clement VII.
20. Daughter and only surviving child of Queen Catherine of Aragon.

THE DIVORCE OF QUEEN CATHERINE.

THE Causes of the Divorce.—You will not have forgotten that Catherine had been wedded to Henry's brother Arthur before her marriage to himself,[1] and grave doubts had been expressed at the time concerning the legality of the second union.[2]

Shakespeare makes Henry give three reasons which moved him to action in the matter. He declared that his first scruple had been excited by certain speeches of the French ambassador when debating the proposed marriage with the Princess Mary.[3] 'In these,' he said, 'it was plainly asked—

> '"Whether our daughter were legitimate,
> Respecting this our marriage with the dowager,
> Sometimes[4] our brother's wife."'[5]

The second motive was found in the death of all the children of the marriage except one sickly girl. He especially dwelt upon the loss of the male issue. "Hence," he stated publicly, "I took a thought this was judgment on me, and that I stood not in the smile of Heaven."

A third reason naturally followed from this. If the marriage were irregular and Mary illegitimate, then, in the event of Henry's death, England would have been exposed to all the dangers of a civil war. In the first place, the long enmity between England and Scotland would have led to the rejection of the hereditary title of his elder sister[6] Margaret in favour of his younger sister Mary.[7] This would have divided the strength of the Lancastrian or Tudor dynasty. Again, there were

several individuals round whom the followers of the house of York rallied—a grandson of Edward IV. still lived,[8] and the Earl of Warwick, whom Henry VII. had executed,[9] had left a sister to uphold his claim. Accordingly, he declared that it was anxiety for the welfare of his kingdom which decided the matter and led him to seek the only apparent remedy.

There were other reasons, however, which Henry did not mention. Wolsey at first undoubtedly promoted the divorce. His quarrel with Charles, led him to desire very strongly an alliance with France, and no better plan suggested itself than to wound his enemy through his family pride,[10] and to place a French princess on the throne that had been so long occupied by a Spanish queen. Afterwards, however, when he found that Henry had determined against the proposed French marriage, he seems to have changed his purpose and sought to keep back the decision he had at first so eagerly desired.

Yet another motive had been at work in Henry's breast —one of a lower kind than any of these, but which proved strong enough to cause the downfall of his long-trusted minister, to separate him from the noble mother of his dead children, and to sever the ties which had during so many ages bound England to Rome.

There had lately been presented at the Court of Queen Catherine a beautiful young lady called Anne Boleyn. She belonged to the noble family of the Howards, and became one of the Queen's maids of honour. Her airs and graces (for she had been educated in France) made her the reigning belle of the royal circle, and Henry seems to have conceived for her a passion before which all the ties of honour, friendship, and religion were rent asunder.

The Course of Proceedings in the Divorce.—In the first place, as has been said, Henry (advised by Wolsey) appealed to the Pope for a dissolution of his marriage with Catherine. But the pontiff[11] was at this time completely in the power of Charles V., the nephew of the injured queen; so that, between the Spanish king[12] on the one hand and Henry on the other, he was, as it were, 'between the hammer and the anvil.'

To put off the evil day, Pope Clement sent over a special legate, the Cardinal Campeggio, who was (along with Wolsey) to inquire into and decide upon the whole matter. Before these judges, Catherine with most pathetic dignity pleaded with her inexorable husband for justice. She even begged for pity, since that she was 'a most poor woman, a stranger, and born out of his dominions;' she reminded him of the memory of their peaceful wedded life, of their many children, and of the careful inquiries made before their marriage. All was in vain! She then expressly repudiated Wolsey as her judge, declaring that he was her enemy and most malicious foe; and she finally appealed to the Pope.

To Henry's great indignation, this course was eventually adopted by the court;[13] and, in the name of the pontiff, both himself and Catherine were summoned to appear at Rome. Henry's passion brooked no delay; he murmured that these cardinals trifled with him, and that he abhorred 'this dilatory sloth and tricks of Rome.'

Already, indeed, a priest of Cambridge, named *Thomas Cranmer*, had suggested that the king should not refer the matter to the Pope and his Roman courts, but should propose to all the universities of Europe the plain question, 'Whether a man could marry his brother's widow?' The king took the hint, sought out the priest,

made him his chaplain, and sent him as one of the chief ambassadors to carry out the scheme.

The appeal to the universities was accordingly made.[14] These learned bodies were divided in opinion, but the English people, "moved by generous feeling, saw nothing in the transaction but the sacrifice of an innocent woman to the passions of a dissolute monarch."[15]

Finally, in 1533, Cranmer, who had been made Archbishop of Canterbury, declared that the 'so-called' marriage between Henry and Catherine was null and void, and pronounced the union between the king and Anne Boleyn legal and valid.[16]

Two years before this, the injured queen had been ordered to leave Windsor, and she was now degraded to her former rank of Princess of Wales. The last three years of her life were spent at Kimbolton in Huntingdonshire, where she died in 1536. Her unmerited wrongs rouse the indignation, and call forth the pity of all who read of them, while her dignified and womanly demeanour under insult and outrage excite the respect and admiration of every generous heart.

The Events which Followed from the Divorce.—The first of the consequences of these discreditable proceedings was *the fall of Wolsey*. The appeal to the Pope had been his plan; and, with the failure of Campeggio to decide in accordance with Henry's desire, he lost all favour with the passionate monarch.

The disgraced minister had no reserve of power on which to fall back. He was surrounded on all sides by enemies. Catherine and her sympathisers, rightly or wrongly, regarded him as the cause of all her sorrow; the kinsmen of Anne Boleyn were not only incensed against him for his opposition to her advance-

ment, but were leaders of that baronial party he had always repressed; he was detested by the nobles, and his arbitrary rule [17] had completely alienated the Commons.

HENRY VIII. DISMISSING WOLSEY.

In the first place, Wolsey was ordered to resign his chancellorship [18] and retire to the mansion of Esher in Surrey. He was then accused of having acted as Papal

Legate and procured bulls from Rome.[19] This charge was most unjust, for these things had been done with the sanction and in the service of the king. The Court of the Star Chamber, however, outlawed him, forfeited all his goods, and declared that his life was at the mercy of the king.

One faithful servant, *Thomas Cromwell*, alone raised his voice in defence of the fallen man, and procured for him pardon and permission to retire to his diocese of York. It is said that Henry had the grace to admire the fidelity and appreciate the ability of Cromwell; at all events, he was for the next few years the king's trusted adviser and the moving spirit in the Lower House.

Wolsey's misfortunes were not yet over. He had been barely a month in the north, and had not even been installed in his archbishopric, when he was arrested on a charge of treason. He was at once conveyed towards London, but on his way he fell sick suddenly, and grew so ill that he could not 'sit his mule.' At length he reached Leicester, where he sought shelter in the abbey.

> "O father abbot,
> An old man, broken with the storms of state,
> Is come to lay his weary bones among ye;
> Give him a little earth for charity!"

This proved his last resting-place, for there he died. On the day before his death[20] he spoke these memorable words. "Henry," said the dying prelate, "is a prince of most royal courage; rather than miss any part of his will, he will endanger one half of his kingdom. . . . Had I but served God as diligently as I have served the king, he would not have given me over in my grey hairs. But this is my just reward for my pains and

study; not regarding my service to God, but only my duty to my prince."[21]

Whatever may have been his faults, one can have little sympathy with the master who so cruelly deserted him. Let us hope that the pathetic and beautiful description given of his last moments is true:—

"His overthrow heap'd happiness upon him;
For then, and not till then, he felt himself,
And found the blessedness of being little:
And, to add greater honours to his age
Than man could give him, he died fearing God."

The Establishment of the Church of England.—Wolsey had seen clearly that reform of the Church had become absolutely necessary. The 'advancement of learning' had led educated men to look with growing discontent upon the privileges and immunities[22] of ecclesiastics, the growth of the national spirit throughout Europe had raised up a natural jealousy of Italian supremacy, and the laxity of morals in many of the clergy had outraged the feelings of the laity.

In Germany and Switzerland, whole states had separated themselves from the rule of the Pope, had given up all attempts at reforming the Church from within, and set themselves outside of her communion.

The movement in the first of these countries had been led by *Martin Luther*,[23] who had attacked with immense energy the alleged corruptions of the Church in doctrine and in life. Now Henry himself was not a reformer; he held firmly by the Catholic doctrines, and had written a treatise against Luther, for which he had received from the pontiff the illustrious title of *Defender of the Faith*.[24]

Taking advantage, however, of the national jealousy

of foreign interference which had so long prevailed in England, he determined to separate the Church of England in all matters of government and discipline from that of Rome. Accordingly he threatened the clergy with the penalties of the same law under which Wolsey had suffered, and they were glad to purchase pardon by the payment of a heavy fine. A year later, all appeals to Rome were forbidden; and finally,[25] '*the king was recognised as the only supreme head, under God, of the Church and realm.*

1. See p. 188.
2. It had been decided, after careful consideration, that there was no lawful bar; the Pope had granted his dispensation; and, with the consent of all, the younger brother had taken the place of the elder.
3. See p. 195.
4. **Sometimes,** here means *at one time.*
5. The poetical quotations in this lesson are from Shakespeare's play of Henry VIII.
6. **Margaret,** elder daughter of Henry VII., had been married to James IV. of Scotland; her son was James V. of Scotland.
7. **Mary,** the younger daughter of Henry VII. had been married first to Louis XII. of France, and then to Charles Brandon, Duke of Suffolk.
8. This was Henry Courtenay, Marquis of Exeter, son of Edward IV.'s daughter Catherine; he was executed in 1539.
9. His sister was Margaret, Countess of Salisbury, who was executed by Henry VIII. in 1541; her eldest son, Lord Montague, was executed in 1539.
10. Charles V. was the nephew of Catherine of Aragon.
11. **The Pontiff,** Clement VII., who succeeded Adrian VI. in 1522.
12. **Spanish King,** Charles V. of Spain had been elected Emperor of Germany in 1519.
13. In June 1529.
14. In 1530.
15. From Mackintosh's History, vol. ii.
16. Henry and Anne Boleyn had been privately married on the 25th January, 1533. Cranmer's public declaration of the validity of the marriage was made on the 28th of May 1533; Anne was crowned on June 1st; and on the 7th of September, she gave birth to a daughter, the Princess Elizabeth.
17. See page 178. There had again been no Parliament from 1523 to 1528.
18. This took place on the 17th October.
19. This was by the final statute of Provisors or Praemunire passed in the reign of Richard II., in the year 1393. By this act, 'any man procuring instruments from Rome, or publishing such instruments, was outlawed, his property forfeited, and his person apprehended.'
20. Wolsey died on the 29th November 1530.
21. From the Biography of Wolsey by Cavendish, who had been his secretary.
22. See pp. 19-21. The Benefit of Clergy was abolished in 1532.
23. Luther's first public appearance against Rome was in 1517; he burned the papal bull commanding him to retract, in 1520; and he defended his views at the Diet of Worms in 1521.
24. This title was conferred in 1521. Our sovereigns still retain it; and on the different coins you find the initial letters D. F., standing for the Latin, 'Defensor Fidei,' *i.e.*, Defender of the Faith.
26. In 1534.

A REIGN OF TERROR.
(1535–1547).

SIR THOMAS MORE.

CHARACTER of the Tyranny.—Henry's character had suffered terrible deterioration as the years rolled on. The poisoned atmosphere of flattery and unrestrained authority had completely corrupted his once attractive disposition. It was not merely that he could brook no opposition to his will and would allow no one to differ from him even in opinion, nor that the coarser passions had obtained unbridled mastery over him, but that an actual thirst for blood seemed to have seized hold upon him.

This tiger-like atrocity makes Henry stand out from all the rest of modern European tyrants. None were spared who came in his path; and the stream of blood[1] swept away his queens[2] and his ministers,[3] the scholar whose thinking he had admired[4] and the poet whose verses he had praised,[5] the noble whom he had called his friend[6] and the soldier[7] who had added glory to his name.[8]

The crime which is said to have marked most clearly the change from the ostentatious joviality of the Henry of the Field of the Cloth of Gold to the dark cruelty of the tyrant of these later years, was the execution of *Sir Thomas More*. This distinguished man was an

accomplished scholar, a brilliant historian, and a wise philosopher; the first English prose writer whose work is free from pedantry, and the first of our statesmen worthy of the name of 'orator.' He had been appointed Chancellor after the fall of Wolsey, and had served Henry most faithfully. His home life, too, was of the most delightful kind; and his happy domestic circle has been made the subject of an interesting picture by the great artist of that age.

As a conscientious Catholic, he could not acknowledge Henry as Head of the Church; he had judged it best to keep silent on the matter, saying merely that he would not meddle with it. In spite of this, because he disapproved of Henry's treatment of Queen Catherine, he was, by a mockery of justice, condemned to death as a traitor.[9]

This frightful crime kindled throughout Europe a detestation of Henry; while Englishmen, afraid apparently to speak out their horror, received the tidings with a sorrow which was not the less profound because it was silent.

The Suppression of the Monasteries.—This reform seems to have been projected by Wolsey;[10] and it was carried out under the direction of that Cromwell of whom you have read as the attendant and faithful defender of the unfortunate minister.[11] The smaller monasteries were suppressed in 1536, and the larger ones in 1539.[12] Enormous wealth thus fell into Henry's hands; of this a portion was retained for the king's own requirements, another share was employed in the establishment of certain bishoprics and cathedrals,[13] but the greater part was gradually distributed among Henry's nobles.

This high-handed action of the king excited great discontent among the masses of the unrepresented commons,[14] and was soon followed by *a series of popular risings.* These insurrections were three in number, and took place in Lincolnshire, Yorkshire, and Cumberland. The first was easily suppressed by the Duke of Suffolk, and the others by the Duke of Norfolk.

The most important was the second. In it, all the peasants from the Tweed to the Humber had taken up arms, and sworn 'to stand by each other for the love of God and of holy Church.' At the head of the insurgents marched priests carrying banners painted with sacred emblems, and, wherever they appeared, they replaced the ejected monks in their monasteries. This rising was called by the suggestive name of *The Pilgrimage of Grace.* In the end nearly all of the leaders were executed, and their followers were hanged by scores in the chief northern towns.

The causes of these insurrections may be nearly all traced to the suppression of the monasteries. There was then in England *no poor law,* and the peasants missed the alms which had been given with so liberal a hand at the door of every one of the religious houses. In the next place, *the monks had been most liberal and indulgent landlords*—living in the midst of their tenants, and spending their revenues among their dependents; while the new proprietors were mostly absentees, and much more strict in the exaction of their dues. *Many of the farms, too, were now turned into pastures,* and the starving labourers were thus cast idle upon the world.

Close of the Reign.—Only a passing reference need be made here to the wars with Scotland and France which closed in the year 1346. In the former, the

Scots gained a victory at *Haldenrig*,[15] but were in turn completely routed by the Cumberland yeomen in the battle of *Solway Moss*.[16] This latter event was followed by the death of the king of Scotland, James V., who left the crown to a little daughter—the ill-fated 'Mary Queen of Scots.'

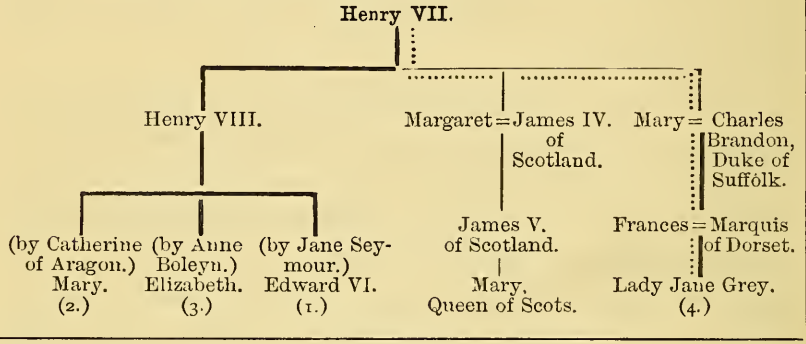
Henry then fruitlessly endeavoured to bring about a marriage between this young princess and his son Edward. In his rage at being opposed, he ordered a cruel invasion of Scotland. This expedition shows well the savage nature of the warfare of the period. The English king's orders were to "burn and subvert—putting man, woman, and child to fire and sword, without any exception when any resistance shall be made."

This 'reign of terror' closed in blood, as it had begun. The noble Earl of Surrey,[17] a gallant soldier and an accomplished poet, was put to death on a most frivolous charge. His father, the Duke of Norfolk (who had been one of Henry's trusted ministers and the uncle of one of his queens),[18] was ordered for execution a few days afterwards; but the king himself died on the very night before the legal murder was to have taken place, and the victim escaped.

Constitutional Importance of the Reign.—It is one of the most striking illustrations of the subserviency of Parliament that it surrendered to Henry VIII.[19] the whole settlement of the succession to the throne, *converting England into the 'private property' of the monarch.* Accordingly, by his will, Henry bequeathed the sovereignty to his three children and their heirs in succession; and then, failing issue of any of these children, he devised the crown to the family of his youngest sister

Mary—setting aside the prior hereditary claim of the descendants of his elder sister Margaret.

TABLE ILLUSTRATING HENRY VIII.'S SETTLEMENT OF THE SUCCESSION.


Henry VII.
Henry VIII.
Margaret = James IV. of Scotland.
Mary = Charles Brandon, Duke of Suffolk.
(by Catherine of Aragon.) Mary. (2.)
(by Anne Boleyn.) Elizabeth. (3.)
(by Jane Seymour.) Edward VI. (1.)
James V. of Scotland.
Mary, Queen of Scots.
Frances = Marquis of Dorset.
Lady Jane Grey. (4.)

In spite of Henry's atrocious despotism, it must be admitted that he worked hard in the government of his country, and left his impress upon the subsequent history of the nation; for, in addition to the after-fruits of the Reformation and the formation of the Church of England, the constitution of these islands now rests in large measure upon foundations laid in this reign.

Ireland was pacified as it had not been for centuries, and its rebellious chiefs were transformed into English peers. It was also put upon a legal equality with England by being declared a kingdom, whereas it had formerly been merely an inferior 'lordship.' Hitherto a large part of Wales and the county palatine[20] of Chester had been semi-independent; they were now made subject to the royal courts, and allowed to send representatives to the English Parliament.

The House of Commons had, during the troubles connected with the Wars of the Roses, sought to confine its attention to the one question of supplies. In other matters, it had become content to pass without discus-

sion the measures of Privy Council; and when Henry ascended the throne, so little did the Commons care for their privileges, that their attendance at the sessions of Parliament had to be enforced by a law. But, after the fall of Wolsey, Henry made constant use of them to subdue the resistance of the House of Lords, repeatedly appealed to them as 'the real representatives of the people,' and may be said to have thrust power upon them. The House of Commons thus became accustomed to deal with the highest business of the nation, and was converted into the first power in the realm under the crown.

1. The notes following (2-7) give a list of the noblest of Henry's victims.
2. **Henry's Queens.**—This king was married six times. His successive queens were the following:—(1) Catherine of Aragon, mother of Queen Mary, *divorced* in 1533; (2) Anne Boleyn, mother of Queen Elizabeth, *executed* in 1536; (3) Jane Seymour, mother of King Edward VI., *died* in 1537; (4) Anne of Cleves, *divorced* in 1540; (5) Catherine Howard, *executed* in 1542; (6) Catherine Parr, who happily *survived* Henry.
3. **Ministers.**—Sir Thomas More, executed in 1535, Cromwell, executed in 1540, were two of Henry's most faithful *ministers*.
4. **Scholars.**—Wolsey, who escaped execution by his death, Sir Thomas More, and Bishop Fisher (executed in 1535), were all 'ripe' *scholars*.
5. **Poets.**—The Earl of Surrey, the last of Henry's victims (executed in 1547), was the most distinguished *poet* of the reign. He was among the first, if not the very first, to introduce blank verse into our poetry.
6. **Friends.**—The Duke of Buckingham (executed in 1521), Wolsey, the Duke of Norfolk (who was only saved from execution by the death of Henry himself), and many of the other victims had been Henry's intimate *friends*.
7. **Soldiers.**—The Earl of Surrey had served with great distinction in the Scottish war at the close of the reign.
8. To the slaughter of the noble individuals mentioned above, must be added great numbers who were put to death in the various bitter religious persecutions. The most ruthless executions followed an act called the *Act of Six Articles*, or the Bloody Statute (1539). Those who denied the *doctrines* therein declared were burned as heretics; on the other hand, those who believed the doctrines, but denied the *king's supremacy over the Church*, were executed as traitors.
9. More's eldest daughter was called Margaret Roper. She got her father's head taken down from London Bridge, kept it during life as a sacred relic, and was buried with it in her arms.
10. Christ's Church College, Oxford, had been endowed by Wolsey with money derived from the suppression of certain monasteries.
11. See page 209.
12. Lingard estimates the whole annual income of the suppressed houses at nearly £150,000, which would be equivalent to at least £2,250,000 at the present day. The moveable wealth was probably worth about £400,000, or £6,000,000 of our present money.
13. It had been intended to found eighteen new bishoprics, but only six were established.
14. **Unrepresented Commons.** See note 4, page 133.
15. **Haldenrig**, or Hedenrigg, in Teviotdale, Roxburghshire.
16. **Solway Moss** (near Carlisle), in 1542.
17. **Surrey.** See note 5 above.
18. **Catherine Howard.** See note 2 above.
19. This Act of Parliament was passed in 1536. Henry at first declared both of his daughters, Mary and Elizabeth, illegitimate; in his will, however, he directed that first should come his son Edward and his issue; second, Mary and her issue; third, Elizabeth and her issue; fourth, his sister Mary and her issue. See table, page 216.
20. **Palatine**, *i.e.*, ruled by a 'prince.'

EDWARD AND MARY.

CRANMER.

THE Religious Changes during the Period.—The three surviving children of Henry VIII. ascended the throne in succession; and, as the first two had but short reigns,[1] it will be convenient to consider them together. This period is remarkable as the arena of the most bitter religious conflict to be found in the history of England.

As we have said, Henry VIII. was no reformer, and had sternly upheld all the doctrines of the Roman Catholic Church. Edward,[2] however, had been educated as a Protestant, and the leaders of that party now came into complete possession of power. They accordingly applied themselves with great vigour not only to finish the work which the late king had begun, but to introduce the changes in ritual and faith necessary to bring the national Church of England into harmony with the tenets of the continental reformers.

In a word, the Reformation was to be pushed violently forward; images of saints were pulled down, pictures and stained windows in churches were forbidden, and many old customs and holy-days were swept away. The Acts under which the persecution[3] by Henry VIII. had been carried on were repealed; and a copy of the English Bible was ordered to be placed in every church, while the Latin liturgy was replaced by a

Book of Common Prayer.[4] Finally, teachers were spread throughout England to preach against papal authority, and to proclaim the special doctrines of Protestantism.

This was not an age when religious toleration was understood. It has been already pointed out that Henry VIII. had carried on a cruel religious persecution;[5] and the reformers, although they shed no blood during the reign of Edward VI., yet had recourse to very oppressive measures, depriving of office and imprisoning their leading adversaries.[6]

A complete change took place when Mary came to the throne.[7] The new sovereign was the daughter of the injured Catherine of Aragon, and was a devoted adherent of the Roman Catholic Church. She had always regarded the recent religious changes with abhorrence, looked back with indignation upon the cruel wrongs of her mother, and determined to restore the old connection with the Church of Rome as speedily as possible. "The queen, in fact, and those around her, acted and felt as a legitimate government restored after an usurpation and treated the recent statutes as null and invalid."[8]

In the first place, those who had been imprisoned by the reformers were released and restored to office. All that had been done in the preceding reign was then simply reversed; and the leading Protestants were ejected from their livings, and placed in close confinement.

As yet Mary had gone no farther on the path of intolerance than her predecessors. Unfortunately, after her marriage with Philip of Spain,[9] she seems to have stifled the promptings of her better nature, and subjected her will entirely to that of her husband. A cruel tyranny followed, the 'Burning Statutes[10] (as they have been

called) were revived, and nearly three hundred of Mary's subjects were committed to the flames.

These terrible persecutions were quite alien to the spirit of the English people. They led many to become Protestant who, at the beginning of the reign, had been of the contrary persuasion; and they caused a terrible odium to attach itself to the name of one who had formerly been admired by all for her gentle ways, and the spotless purity of her private life.

EDWARD VI.

A Troubled Regency.—The new king was a boy of ten. The will of Henry VIII. had entrusted the government during the minority to a council consisting entirely of the 'new' nobility—men who owed their rank to his favour and their wealth to the spoils of the suppressed monasteries, and who would, accordingly, be bound to the young king by the double ties of gratitude and self-interest. The council, however, conferred all their authority on the Earl of Hertford, the uncle of the king,[11] who was made Duke of Somerset. This nobleman was appointed not only guardian of the young king, but Lord Protector of the realm; and they gave him full power to act as he thought fit independent of themselves.

The new regent was a man of large heart, keenly alive to the miseries of the people and full of sympathy for their sufferings. The wise portions of the policy of the previous king were to be vigorously carried out; while a rule of gentleness, justice, and universal liberality was

to take the place of the stern despotism of the past. The great fault of this noble man was the common one of trying to do everything at once; and it soon became clear that he could not successfully grasp the various lines of policy which the undoubted ability of the late king had enabled him to centre in himself.

In religious matters, the violence of his changes raised a wide-spread feeling of revolt among the masses of the people, who still clung to the old faith; while his well-meant but over-hasty endeavours to help the poor offended the richer classes, and led to actual insurrection.[12]

Failure also attended him in foreign affairs. He plunged England into an unsuccessful war with France, and the imperious way in which he insisted upon the marriage between Mary of Scotland and the young Edward led to the complete ruin of the scheme of union. For, although war was declared and the Scots were defeated at the battle of *Pinkie*,[13] the young queen was immediately sent over to France, and was there solemnly betrothed to the Dauphin.[14]

The great interest of this reign, however, attaches to *the state of the masses of the people*. You have just read of the causes which, after the suppression of the monasteries, led to popular risings. Things were even worse now. The new proprietors were not content with their great possessions, but enclosed the 'common' land—thus depriving the poor of the right of free pasture.

Somerset sought earnestly to help the suffering masses, and he appointed a commission to see that the laws for the relief of the poor were properly carried out. A graphic account of the ills complained of has been handed down by one of these commissioners. He complains of the decay of towns and villages, and laments "that poor

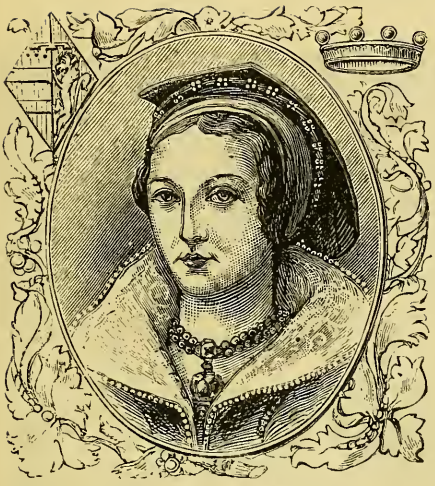
men's habitations be utterly destroyed everywhere, and in no small number; and that, husbandry having abated,[15] the king's subjects are wonderfully diminished."

The famous Latimer,[16] in a sermon preached before king Edward in 1549, boldly contrasts the prosperous condition of the farmers in his father's day with their wretched state at the time he was speaking. Here are his very words [7]:—

"My father was a yeoman, and had no lands of his own, only he had a farm of three or four pound by year at the uttermost, and hereupon he tilled so much as kept half a dozen men. He had walk for a hundred sheep, and my mother milked thirty kine. He was able and did find the king a harness, with himself and his horse, while he came to the place that he should receive the king's wages. He kept me to school, or else I had not been able to have preached before the king's majesty now. He kept hospitality for his poor neighbours, and some alms he gave to the poor; and all this did he of the said farme. Where he that now hath it, payeth sixteen pounds a year, or more, and is not able to do anything for his prince, for himself, nor for his children, or give a cup of drink to the poor. Thus all the enhancing and rearing goeth to your *private commodity* and to *wealth*."

1. Edward VI. reigned from 1547-1553; Mary from 1553-1558.
2. **The young Edward.** He was born in 1537, and was thus 10 years old at his accession.
3. These were the (1) 'Burning Statutes' of Richard II. and Henry IV. against the Lollards; (2) all the Acts in matters of religion passed under Henry VIII. except those directed against the papal supremacy; (3) all the treasons created in the late reign; and (4) the Act which gave the royal proclamation the force of law.
4. **Book of Common Prayer**, the work of *Cranmer*. The historian Froude says, "As the translation of the Bible bears upon it the imprint of the mind of Tyndale, so, while the Church of England remains, the image of Cranmer will be reflected on the calm surface of the Liturgy."
5. See note 3 above.
6. Gardiner, Bishop of Winchester; Bonner, Bishop of London; Tunstal, Bishop of Durham; Day, Bishop of Chichester; and Heath, Bishop of Worcester.
7. In 1553.
8. From Hallam's 'Constitutional History.'
9. **Philip of Spain** was son of the Charles V. who has been so often mentioned in the reign of Henry viii. He was Mary's half cousin.
10. See note 3 above.
11. **Uncle of the King.** He was the brother of Edward's mother, Lady Jane Seymour.
12. These insurrections took place both in the western counties of Cornwall and Devon, and in the eastern county of Norfolk. They were nearly as serious as the rising of Wat Tyler and Jack Cade; the Norfolk rising was led by Jack Ket, a tanner. It is a point worthy of notice that *German mercenaries* were employed in the suppression of these risings.
13. **Pinkie**, 7 miles from Edinburgh, in Midlothian. The battle took place in 1547.
14. The Dauphin, afterwards Francis II.
15. One great cause of complaint was the creating of large sheep farms where there had been ploughed land before.
16. Latimer, Bishop of Worcester, the father of the English Church, was put to death at Oxford in the Marian persecution.
17. The spelling only is changed.

TWO QUEENS.



LADY JANE GREY.

THE Noble Lady Jane Grey.[1]—The ambitious Duke of Northumberland[2] brought about the downfall and execution of the good-hearted but foolish Protector. He then persuaded the young king, who was an enthusiastic supporter of Protestantism, that he had a right to dispose of the throne,[3] and that the interests of the new religion rendered it necessary to pass over the two princesses, Mary and Elizabeth. Edward accordingly left the crown to the next in succession[4]—the pious and learned Lady Jane Grey.[5] The wily schemer had, meanwhile, effected a marriage between the heiress and his son; and, in this way, he hoped that he should soon virtually hold within his grasp the sceptre of the realm.

Lady Jane was very reluctant to exchange her delightful life of seclusion and study for the glitter and danger of a throne. The cunning worldlings around her proved too much for the natural good sense of the inexperienced and simple girl. They appealed to her love of religion[6]; they then proved to her, 'with words clothed in reason's garb,' that her claim was the rightful one, so that she could be doing no injustice to her cousins, Mary and Elizabeth;[7] and, above all, they brought to bear upon

her the full force of that parental authority to which her gentle nature had always submitted.[8]

She at last yielded to the combined influence of hus-

LADY JANE GREY URGED TO ACCEPT THE CROWN

band and parents, and for *nine days* was surrounded with all the pomp of royalty. It was on the 10th of July 1553 that she was proclaimed in London, and publicly received at the Tower as queen; but, by the 19th,

the supporters of Mary had triumphantly established her claim, and Lady Jane gladly returned to that retirement where—

'Careless quiet lyes
Wrapt in eternal silence farre from enimyes.' [9]

She was not allowed to enjoy this peaceful life; for she was quickly consigned to the Tower; and, after seven months' imprisonment, was executed on the grassy plot in front of the gloomy place of her captivity. From the window of her cell, on the fatal morning, she saw her unhappy husband [10] led to the block, and beheld his headless body borne to the grave.

It was then that she finally welcomed her coming death as a glad release; and wrote the last entry in that note-book which, girl-like, she had ever made the treasure-house of her sweetest thoughts—"If my fault deserved punishment, my youth at least and my imprudence were worthy of excuse. God and posterity will show me favour."

The weary days she had spent alone had not been fruitless, for they had given her quiet to think calmly out the drama of her life. On the scaffold, she said that she had erred not through ambition but through reverence to her parents, and that she willingly received death for having injured the law. Her dying hope was that her story might teach to all the lesson that innocence does not excuse misdeeds if they tend to the destruction of the commonwealth; and her last words were—"Lord, into thy hands, I commend my spirit."

Thus passed away one of the most beautiful characters that make noble the history of England. Of such pure hearts as hers, one of her sweetest poets [11] was thinking when he wrote these words:—

'Only a pure and virtuous soul,
Like seasoned timber, never gives;
But, when the whole world turns to coal,[12]
Then chiefly lives.'

QUEEN MARY.

The Daughter of Catherine of Aragon.—Mary was an unfortunate and most unhappy woman. Her youth had been a desolate one—she had seen her stately mother degraded from the throne and deprived of the name of wife, while she herself had been for years an outcast from the home of her childhood and from the affection of her father.

Her marriage,[13] which might have brought with it some comfort, caused only the bitterest disappointment. From the first it had been disliked by her people, and even led to a revolt[14] of which the avowed purpose was her dethronement and the elevation of her sister to the throne. Her husband, too, cared not for her, and, being wholly wrapt up in himself, had not the grace to assume a tenderness which he did not feel.

She seems to have surrendered her will completely to her husband and the advisers whom he placed around her. Accordingly, England became, as it were, a mere province of Spain. In this matter, no pity for Mary's joyless life can prevent us from condemning her actions. The queen of a great country has no right to surrender the liberties of her people; and it must be said that, *as a queen*, Mary did more to enslave England than any sovereign who ever sat upon the throne.[15]

Still, let our last thoughts of her be gentle ones. The history of no country presents a more melancholy picture than the last days of Mary—a sad-eyed woman, unloved by her husband, childless, and (save for her grateful servants [16]) almost friendless, descending to the grave unregretted by a people who had hailed her coming with enthusiastic joy.

THE DEATH OF QUEEN MARY.

1. **The noble Lady Jane Grey.** This illustrious lady is so called by a famous writer, Roger Ascham, in his book 'The Schole-master.'
2. **Duke of Northumberland,** better known by the title of Earl of Warwick. He was the son of that Dudley who had been the agent of Henry VII.'s extortion.
3. Northumberland reasoned that Edward had as much right as Henry VIII. to settle the succession. He forgot to tell Edward that it was *Parliament* that gave to Henry, and to Henry alone, the right.
4. See table, p. 216.
5. See p. 176.
6. Lady Jane was a firm Protestant.
7. They were her half-cousins. See table, p. 216.
8. At that time parents were very strict in their discipline. Roger Ascham tells us that Lady Jane's parents were extremely sharp and severe.
9. Spenser's 'Fairy Queen,' B. i., c. i.
10. Lord Guildford Dudley. Both husband and wife were executed on the same day—the 11th February 1554.
11. George Herbert (1593-1633), in his book called 'The Temple.'
12. **Coal.** This word used to mean 'anything that *kindles* or *burns*.' The poet therefore means that, at the Last Day, when the whole world is burned, the virtuous soul does not perish, but *lives*.
13. With Philip of Spain. It took place on the 25th of July 1554.
14. This was known as 'Wyatt's Rebellion.' It was made the occasion of ordering Lady Jane Grey's execution.
15. This marriage was an evil one to the very last. Through it England became involved in a French war, in which *Calais*, which had been held by England for a century and a half, was surrendered to the enemy. Mary is said to have exclaimed that at her death the word 'Calais' would be found written on her heart.
16. Mary was especially kind and considerate to her servants.

THE GREAT ELIZABETH.

1558–1603.

ELIZABETH.

GENERAL Character of the Reign.—Elizabeth had now reached her twenty-fifth year; and, before the close of the reign, she had completed the full threescore and ten. At her accession, difficulties and dangers threatened the realm. At *home*, many entertained doubts as to the legitimacy of the new queen,[1] and the nation was almost equally divided between the two religious bodies; while *abroad*, England had fallen from its former lofty position and become the mere protégé[2] of Spain. But at her death, Elizabeth left her kingdom united, prosperous, and raised to a loftier pitch of greatness than it had ever reached before. Previous reigns may have been longer;[3] but this one stands unrivalled in its sustained progress, which culminated in the stately splendour of what has ever since been called the Elizabethan Period.

As the years rolled on, England ceased to remain merely on the defensive; and began to pursue a more active policy, and to play a loftier part on the stage of the world. The course of European history and the bold courage of her people caused her to act as *Champion of Protestantism* in Europe; the spirit of *naval enterprise* animated her mariners, who made the name of

this island known on every sea; and her people began that marvellous *colonising movement* which has erected the most enduring monument of England's greatness.[4]

From this world-wide 'positive'[5] course of action, there arose in the hearts of the people that 'Consciousness of Worth' so necessary both to nations and individuals. Gathering up into one splendid ideal all the glories of the past and the triumphs of the present, Englishmen began to feel a new-born exultant pride in their race and country; they believed that it was a special privilege to have had their 'limbs made in England,' were eager to show the world 'the mettle of their pasture,' and to be copy to 'men of baser blood.'[6]

Before the time of this great queen, it would have been impossible for any poet to have sung to England strains so melodious as these: "This precious stone set in a silver sea;" "This blessed spot, this earth, this realm, this England;"[7] "Little body with a mighty heart."[8]

Elizabeth as a Woman.—The Elizabeth who led her people on 'this path of glory' was by no means a perfect character. Not strictly beautiful in form, she was yet stately in bearing and witty in conversation; and she was possessed of a high-minded self-respect that enabled her to pass safely through temptations which might have overcome a weaker woman. On the other hand, she was vain and coquettish, wayward and capricious. Above all, even to old age, she was *intensely fond of admiration.*

Accordingly, she was constantly surrounded by a circle of favourites, on whom she conferred the most lucrative posts at her disposal—courtiers who had attracted her notice by their beauty, wit, or lover-like adoration, and who could hope to retain their positions only by romantic gallantries and tender flatteries. Thus

it was that the adventurous Raleigh [9] won her favour by

RALEIGH AND ELIZABETH.

deftly spreading his velvet cloak upon the muddy ground,

lest she should soil her dress in passing onward towards the river; and thus, too, he rose in her regard, until he became (as the poet Spenser calls him[10]) his 'sovereign goddess's most dear delight.'

Another little glimpse into that now dim courtier-world which Elizabeth, to the last, loved to see around her, is given to us in the story of a little poem written by the noble Sir Philip Sidney.[11] Between the leaves of a dust-covered copy of the Arcadia, in the old library of Wilton House, was found a faded yellow paper, which, when opened, disclosed to view a lock of hair 'soft and bright, and of a light brown colour inclining to red.'[12] On the paper containing this relic of a past century, were written these words:—'This lock of Queen Elizabeth's own hair was presented to Sir Philip Sidney by her Majesty's owne fair hande, on which he made these verses, and gave them to the queen on his bended knee. Anno Domini[13] 1573.'[14] Pinned to this first paper was a second, on which were traced these words:—

"Her inward worth all outward show transcends,
Envy her merits with regret commends;
Like sparkling gems her virtues draw the sight,
And in her conduct[15] she is alwaies[16] bright.
When she imparts her thoughts her words have force,
And sense and wisdom flow in sweet discourse."

Elizabeth was also fond of luxury and splendour. She liked to visit in state her great nobles, making brilliant processions through the country as she passed to and from their seats. There they strove to entertain her in the most gorgeous and costly manner—days of pageantry and pleasure being followed by evenings of stately dance and gallant courtesy.

Elizabeth as a Queen.—How was it, then, that this

pleasure-loving, capricious woman led the English people to honour and glory? The answer is not difficult. You have already learned that the greatest crime a king can commit is the neglect of his royal duties as governor and defender of his people. Now Elizabeth never for a moment forgot that she was the ruler of a mighty empire. As a woman, she may have been unamiable and full of faults; but, *as a sovereign*, she ever sought the good of her people; as a queen, she played well her part, and 'there all the honour lies.'

In this aspect of her character, Elizabeth appears as 'more than man.'[17] From her father she inherited great working power and excellent ability; and she had carefully cultivated her naturally powerful intellect.[18] She could feel, as even few men feel, a steady, unselfish interest in a great cause. Every public act of her reign, her numerous letters to sovereigns and others, all her dealings with her ministers, reveal a bold, imperious, energetic spirit. This 'energy' was, however, completely under the control of a far-seeing prudence. One can hardly believe that the subtle caution which marked all her dealings with France and Spain, belongs to the impulsive being who publicly boxed the ears of the favourite who had offended her.[19] Accordingly, just as the vain woman listened well-pleased to flattering courtiers, so *the prudent queen surrounded her throne with wise statesmen, to whom she habitually looked for counsel.*

The light in which she regarded these ministers is well shown in words of her own. Her chief adviser was Cecil, who was made Lord Burleigh. In choosing him she spoke as follows:—"This judgment I have of you, that you will not be corrupted with any manner of gifts, and that you will be faithful to the State, and that

without respect to my private will you will give me that counsel which you think best." And with that knowledge of men which seems instinctively to belong to those fitted to lead their fellows, she chose wisely—for never had sovereign a more sagacious and devoted minister, than she had in the great statesman who successfully guided her through all the dangers of her reign.

On the other hand, she never permitted even her most trusted adviser to subdue her will or dictate her course of action. In a letter to James VI. of Scotland on this matter, she writes as follows :—"Must a king be prescribed what councillors he shall take, as if you were their ward? Shall you be obliged to tie or undo what they list to make or revoke? *If I might appoint their university, they should be assigned to learn first to obey.*"

Accordingly, while praising the fidelity and wisdom of Elizabeth's advisers, the genius, courage, and skill of her courtier-soldiers, and the bold enterprise of her admirals, all must feel that 'the master-spirit' of the reign is none other than the great queen herself.

1. The Roman Catholics could not receive the divorce of Catherine of Aragon as lawful, and accordingly held that Henry could not marry legally during her lifetime. Now Elizabeth, the daughter of Anne Boleyn, was born while Catherine was alive, and was therefore regarded by some as illegitimate.
2. **Protégé**, one under the *protection* of another.
3. Elizabeth reigned 45 years; Henry III. (1216-1272) 56 years; Edward III. (1327-1377) 50 years; George III. (1760-1820) 60 years; our gracious Queen began to reign 1837.
4. England's magnificent colonies are the most wonderful proofs of her greatness.
5. Positive here means *decisive, definite, active.* The opposite term is 'negative.'
6. The quotations are from Shakespeare's play of Henry V., act ii. sc. 1.
7. These quotations are from Shakespeare's play of Richard II., act ii. sc. 2.
8. This quotation is from Henry V., act ii. chorus.
9. **Raleigh** (1552-1618), a famous courtier and discoverer of this reign. He founded the colony of Virginia. He was also distinguished as a poet, historian, and scholar.
10. In one of the introductory sonnets to his great poem of The Fairy Queen.
11. **Sidney** (1554-1586). He was the author of various poems. His great work is a prose romance called Arcadia.
12. The relic was exhibited before the Archæological Society of Wilts at Salisbury in September 1854.
13. *Anno Domini*, means '*in the year of the Lord*,' *i.e.*, since the birth of Christ. It is usually written A.D.
14. Sir Philip was at this time 19 years of age, Elizabeth was 40.
15. **Conduct** has not quite our ordinary commonplace meaning here. It means 'management of the realm' as well as 'management of herself.'
16. **Alwaies**, *i.e. always.*
17. Elizabeth's minister Cecil said of her that she was 'more than man and less than woman.'
18. See p. 176.
19. Elizabeth boxed the ears of the Earl of Essex, the favourite of her old age.

THE POLICY OF ELIZABETH.

ELIZABETH at Home and abroad.—The home and the foreign policy of this reign are so closely connected as to be inseparable. England, as has been said, had lost its place as one of the great powers of Europe. The statesmen of the Continent had learned to look upon England as quite unable to defend itself, and as preserved from conquest by either France or Spain only by the mutual rivalry of these empires.

Now Cecil and Elizabeth resolutely set themselves to play off the jealousy of these western powers, the one against the other, until by a wise home policy they might make England once more able to stand alone, and to pursue its own destiny 'safe from interference of external force.' In this difficult, and (in the opinion of all but themselves) almost hopeless task, the queen and her minister were thoroughly successful.

What was to be the 'wise home policy' which would once more make the country strong? Elizabeth desired to return in the main to the position in religious matters held by her father—a separation from Rome in ecclesiastical government and organisation, but unity with the Catholic Church in all essential doctrines. Cecil saw that this course would certainly fail, for it would still leave England dependent upon one or other of the two great powers. He held that the only honourable and safe course for England was to identify herself with the Protestant cause; that by aiding the Reformed Church in the Netherlands against Spain, and the Huguenots in France, this country would so weaken these kingdoms that they would be powerless to attack her and she would be independent of both. In this matter, aided by

the course of events, Cecil gradually won over the reluctant queen; and thus England, as she grew stronger, gradually became the champion of Protestantism.

Protestantism was re-established by two Acts of Parliament:[1] the first declared the queen head of the Church, and the second enacted that *all* clergymen should use the English Book of Common Prayer. Elizabeth certainly allowed freedom of *opinion*, but she insisted that all within the realm should conform *outwardly* to the service of the Church. Her view of the matter was quite clear. "The law of the land," she reasoned, "has prescribed a certain form of worship, and to that every good subject must adhere." It is very remarkable that even those whom Elizabeth persecuted for refusing to conform, regarded her, in common with the great mass of her people, with enthusiastic and loyal affection.

By a wise economy and the encouragement of national industry[2] and commerce, Elizabeth led her country (which grew more and more Protestant in spirit) to become prosperous, contented, and strong; and when at last the long-delayed attack by one of the two great powers took place, England was able to rise in her native might, and, *unaided*, to hurl back upon the invader the destruction with which he had threatened her shores.[3]

The Hero of Zutphen.—Spain at that time had possession of the Netherlands. The northern states had become Protestant; and, driven by persecution, they at length rebelled and formed themselves into an independent state. There was thus formed the country now called by us Holland, then known by the name of the Republic of the United Provinces.[4]

Without declaring war against Spain, Elizabeth had long encouraged her subjects to aid the people of the

Netherlands in their struggle for freedom. As the heroic but unequal conflict grew more desperate, the popular feeling in England ran high against Spain; privateers swarmed from all the western ports to attack her coasts and commerce; and at last Elizabeth determined to send an army to the scene of war.[5]

The expedition was ill-equipped, badly supported, and altogether a failure. It was at sea, not on land, that England's road to greatness lay. The army was placed under the command of the Earl of Leicester, the chief favourite of the queen but a most incompetent general.

One incident, however, redeems the campaign from oblivion. The English army had laid siege to the fortress of Zutphen,[6] and the famous Duke of Parma led a Spanish army to its release. Leicester thought that but a small force was on the march, and sent Sir Philip Sidney with five hundred men to stop its advance.

Attacked by overwhelming numbers, the Englishmen fought with surpassing valour, but were at last driven back. The greatest loss was that of their noble leader. This brave knight was looked upon with admiration by every one in England; he was called 'the last flower of chivalry,' and was distinguished alike as a writer, a courtier, and a soldier.

The last scene of his life was worthy of his career of honour. As he lay bleeding upon the ground, his sorrowful followers brought him a little water to cool his parched lips, and he thanked them as he raised the flask to his mouth. At that moment a wounded soldier was borne past. His longing eyes lingered upon the precious draught. The dying hero caught that wistful look; and, stretching out his hand, he gave his fellow-sufferer the water he needed so much himself—saying the

while, 'Drink, Comrade! thy necessity is greater than mine.'

All England bewailed the 'timeless fate'[7] of one who

'DRINK, COMRADE! THY NECESSITY IS GREATER THAN MINE.'

had been regarded by all as the most generous and noble of her sons; and from that day to this, the memory of

his last unselfish act has never been allowed to pass into forgetfulness—

> 'For those bright laurels never fade with years,
> Whose leaves are watered by a nation's tears.'

1. Passed in 1558; the first is called the Act of Supremacy, the second, the Act of Uniformity.
2. **Industries.** Crowds of artisans, cloth-weavers, &c., poured into England to escape the persecution in the Netherlands.
3. This refers to the Armada.
4. This took place in 1579. Holland is still properly called the Netherlands.
5. This took place in 1586.
6. **Zutphen,** on the river Issel, in the north of Holland
7. **Timeless fate,** *i.e.*, *untimely* fate. The words are from Sir Walter Raleigh's short poem on the death of Sir Philip Sydney.

THE ARMADA.

THE Causes of the Armada.—The name 'Armada'[1] is applied to a great fleet fitted out by Philip of Spain[2] for the avowed purpose of deposing Elizabeth from the throne.[3] It was for a crisis like this that Cecil and his queen had been for thirty years prudently preparing; and the result fully entitles both minister and monarch to the name of 'Great.' English patriotism responded nobly to the summons of danger; and every man within the realm was ready to fight to the death in defence of the liberty of his country.

The *causes* of the hostility between Spain and England were various. In the first place, undoubtedly, was the religious difference between the nations. The Spanish people were devotedly attached to the Roman Catholic Church, and hated the English bitterly for supporting the rebels in Holland; while, on the other hand, the commercial classes in England, who formed the strength of the Protestant party, were not one whit behind in the intensity of their antipathy[4] to Spain.

The second ground of rivalry is to be found in the struggle for *naval supremacy.* Spain was at this time

'monarch of the ocean,' but the bold seamen of England, stirred by their new-born spirit of 'maritime enterprise,' were determined to dispute the sovereignty of the sea; and privateers swarmed from her ports, whose mariners were animated by undying hostility towards everything Spanish. The Spaniards retaliated, and subjected to torture, imprisonment, and death English sailors who fell into their hands. Few of their prisoners escaped alive; and the rovers from England regarded themselves as the 'ministers of vengeance and pursuit'[5] against the murderers of lost fathers, brothers, and comrades.

The same spirit of hostility was manifested in the West, where the Spaniards maintained their right to the possession of the entire New World. The adventurous 'mariners of England,' worthy sons of the Saxon seamen and Norse Vikings of old, challenged this gigantic claim, and thus interfered with Spain in its *colonial empire* and mercantile monopoly. Many daring expeditions were made by the hardy seamen of England, who learned to look without dread upon the huge ships of their enemy.

Further, Philip was incensed at the help given by Elizabeth to the Netherlands, and had perhaps been wounded by her refusal to marry him. He also declared that he came to avenge the execution of Mary Queen of Scots.

Mary Queen of Scots.—This beautiful but unfortunate queen had offended Elizabeth and endangered the safety of the throne by assuming the title of Queen of England;[6] and she had refused to renounce her claim unless she were recognised as heiress to the crown in case of Elizabeth's death.

Her career was one of the most stirring and eventful that history presents to us. Within a week of her

birth[7] she became monarch of Scotland; and in her seventeenth year she had been crowned Queen of France. After a year of magnificence, her young husband died, and she had then to return to her gloomy northern realm. Eight years of strife and folly were followed by her imprisonment in the lonely island of Lochleven.[8] She was there forced to abdicate; but, after a year's captivity, escaped. The defeat of *Langside*,[9] however, drove her to take refuge with her rival of England.[10]

QUEEN MARY.

She was, by Elizabeth and her ministers, kept for nineteen years in captivity, and was then, on the 8th of February 1587, executed at *Fotheringay Castle*. This deed will ever remain the foulest blot on the memory of the English queen. Neither she nor her ministers had any right to take away the life of the ill-starred rival whom unmerciful disaster had compelled to seek shelter on their shores.

Mary Stuart has been accused not only of follies, but of crimes. Those who sit as judges upon this erring woman should remember that the whole active part of her life was over before she was twenty-five years of age.[11] No opportunity of redeeming her past was ever given to the 'prisoner of Fotheringay.'[12]

Preparations for the Struggle.—Meanwhile, the whole resources of both nations were being prepared for the coming struggle. In the harbours of Spain, Portugal,

Naples, and Sicily ceaseless activity prevailed until there was equipped a magnificent fleet of 135 ships,[13] carrying 3765 guns, 8000 seamen, and 19,000 soldiers. The command was given to the greatest of Spanish admirals, the veteran Santa Cruz.

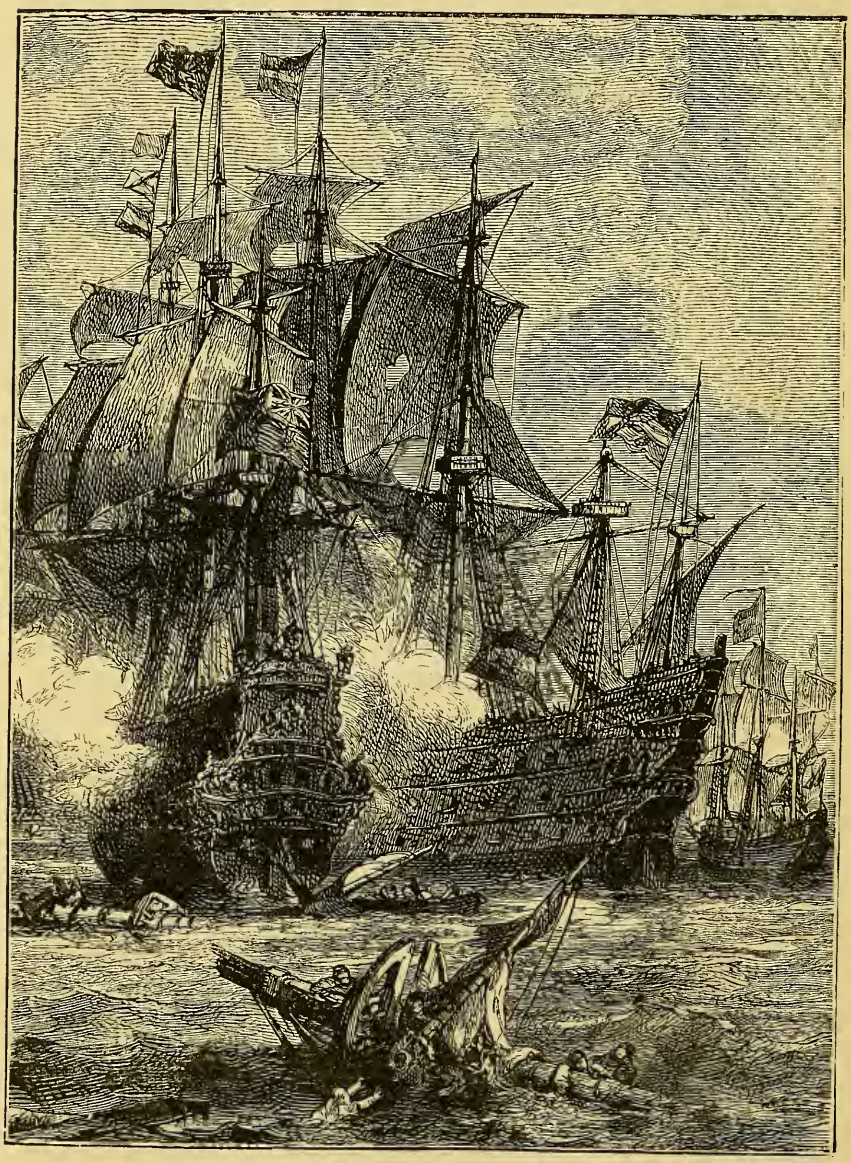
This was not all; for the rivers and canals of Belgium[14] swarmed with flat-bottomed boats which were to convey to England a splendid force of 30,000 infantry and 18,000 cavalry. The Spaniards, dreaming that only a victory at sea and a triumph on shore awaited them, exultingly called their fleet 'The Invincible Armada.'

While England was making its preparations, the gallant Drake[15] was sent to destroy every ship he could find on the coasts of Spain. In Cadiz Roads[16] alone he captured or burned 80 vessels, and then destroyed 100 more between that port and Cape St. Vincent.[17]

In England, an army and a fleet had both to be formed. For the former purpose the militia were enrolled and divided into two bodies—one of 36,000 men being set apart for the bodyguard of the queen, the other of 30,000 men for the defence of the capital. As no one could tell where the invader might land, the armed inhabitants were so organised that 20,000 men could assemble at any part of the coast within twenty-four hours.

Never did Elizabeth bear herself more nobly, and her courage called forth the most enthusiastic devotion in the hearts of her people. A great camp had been formed at *Tilbury Fort*[18] on the Thames; and there she is said to have reviewed her troops, and to have addressed them in words that stirred the nation 'like the blast of a trumpet:'—"I know I have the body of a weak feeble woman; but I have the heart of a king, and of a king of England too, and think foul

shame that Parma or Spain, or any prince of Europe,



"THOSE HUGE CASTLES OF CASTILIAN KING."

should dare to invade the borders of my realm; to which

rather than any dishonour should grow by me, I myself will take up arms."

Still greater importance depended upon the equipment of a fleet. The royal navy then consisted of but thirty-six moderately-sized vessels; and had not England answered to the call with that spirit which makes a nation invincible, this land would almost certainly have been conquered by the veteran soldiers of Spain.

At length, 147 vessels, mostly of small size, were ready to meet the overwhelming force of the enemy. The guns were in number hardly one-fourth of the enemy's artillery; but the ships were manned by 16,000 seamen—men inured to hardship and danger on every sea. This intrepid band of heroes was commanded by the noble Lord Howard of Effingham. Under him were Drake, Hawkins, Raleigh, Frobisher, and many other experienced seamen. A second fleet under Lord Seymour was sent to watch the coasts of Flanders.

The Fight for Freedom.—Disaster attended the Armada from the very outset. Its admiral died, and in his place was appointed the Duke of Medina-Sidonia, who had no knowledge of naval affairs. Again, hardly had it set sail, when a great storm scattered it, and drove it back to Corunna[19] to refit.

Howard sailed southward to ascertain the real state of the enemy, and then a south-west wind bore him back to England. The great Armada followed him; and he had just cast anchor in Plymouth harbour when a swift boat brought the tidings that the Spanish fleet had been sighted off the Lizard.[20] Drake and his fellow-captains were ashore playing at bowls at the time, and coolly went on with their sport—the hero of Cadiz calmly saying, "No hurry, my friends; I know these

lagging Spaniards. We have plenty of time to finish the game and then beat the enemy."

On the next day, the 20th of July 1588, the English had their first full view of the Spanish armament. In a huge crescent, the great ships swept on in stately silence. Their very bulk proved their destruction; for the low-lying English ships dashed in below the range of their guns, and attacked them almost with impunity.

In the very first skirmish, Drake captured a large treasure ship, and three great galleons were also taken. Twice the brave Howard led an attack against the whole line of the enemy; and on both occasions[21] he had to draw off his ships, simply because they had not a single round of ammunition left.

SIR FRANCIS DRAKE.

As the Armada advanced up the Channel, small ships dashed out of every creek to have one shot at the hated foe; for the great struggle was yet to come, and the fate of Europe depended upon the union of the still mighty fleet with the forces of Parma.

Well did the poet Spenser, in his sonnet to Lord Howard, praise him and his men:—

> "Sith[22] those huge castles of Castilian king,
> That vainly threatened kingdoms to displace,
> Like flying doves ye did before you chase."

On the 27th of July, the Armada reached Calais,

and it remained there instead of sailing on to Dunkirk,[23] where Parma lay. On the night of the 29th, Howard sent eight fire-ships in among them. These terrible vessels filled the enemy with dismay. The anchors of many were cut; and, as the wind rose, they did one another much damage in the confusion.

That night a fierce gale blew, and when the Armada rallied at *Gravelines*,[24] it numbered only eighty ships. All the rest had perished in the storm or been captured; and the disheartened survivors sailed round the north of Scotland. The want of ammunition alone prevented the English from utterly destroying the Spanish fleet.

As it was, the fugitives found in the elements another and not less terrible foe. The wild coast of Scotland, and the rock-bound shores of Norway, were strewn with the fragments of the shattered ships.

The storm-blast still pursued them, 'tyrannous and strong;' making the Western Islands and the wave-beaten crags of Ireland[25] the scenes of many wrecks.

At last, about the end of September, fifty weather-beaten ships crept into harbour in Spain—their crews exhausted with wounds, disease, and labour. In achieving this momentous victory, the English fleet had lost but one vessel and a very few men.

Effects of the Armada.—It is needless to speak of the profound joy that filled the hearts and homes of England. All, even the most worldly, ascribed the victory to God, 'who blew, and they were scattered.'

The *effects* of this triumph may be briefly stated. Protestantism was now rendered secure, and Elizabeth was regarded by the 'free and the enterprising throughout the world,' as the champion of religious freedom.

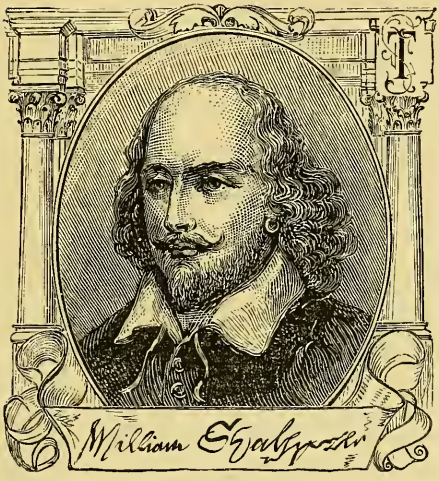
In England all strife of party was hushed: and

henceforward no breath of plot or danger ever again threatened the great queen. This left the people undisturbed to enjoy to the fullest the rich intellectual splendour of the closing years of the reign. There followed, however, a series of retaliatory expeditions against Spain, which kept alive the national hatred against that humbled nation.

Finally (one is almost ashamed to write it), this divine triumph was followed by a severe persecution of the Roman Catholics. This was doubly unjust and cruel. Lord Howard of Effingham, the successful admiral, was himself of that religion; and no Englishmen had fought more bravely than those now pursued and attacked. So true is it that the age was one in which the spirit of toleration was not understood even by those who used its name.

1. **Armada**, a fleet of *armed* ships.
2. Philip was the mightiest prince of the age. His dominions included Spain, Naples, Sicily, the Netherlands, and the greater part of North America.
3. He had been brooding over this expedition for fifteen years (perhaps since 1565), and had been making preparations for five years.
4. **Antipathy**, intense hatred; the word literally means a *feeling against* any one.
5. This quotation is from Milton's 'Paradise Lost,' Book I.
6. See table, page 216. If Henry VIII.'s divorce was illegal (as the Roman Catholics held), then his marriage with Anne Boleyn was also illegal, and Elizabeth would therefore be illegitimate.
7. Mary was born in December 1542.
8. **Lochleven**, in Kinross.
9. **Langside**, near Glasgow.
10. Mary sailed across the Solway in an open fishing boat on the 16th May 1568. She landed at Workington on the coast of Cumberland.
11. Mary's active life really ended with her imprisonment in Lochleven Castle in 1567, when she had not completed her twenty-fifth year.
12. **Fotheringay Castle**, on the Nen in Northampton, 27 miles N.-E. of Northampton.
13. It is interesting to compare the ships of those days with our own ironclads. The 135 vessels of the Armada had a total tonnage of 59,120 tons, or an average of 438 tons. At the end of 1881 the eight largest ships of the British navy had 65,959 tons, an average of 8,245 tons.
14. Belgium and Holland were then often spoken of as the Low Countries.
15. In 1587. This expedition of Drake's delayed the Armada for a whole year.
16. **Cadiz**, on the S.W. coast of Spain.
17. **Cape St. Vincent**, on the S.W. coast of Portugal.
18. **Tilbury Fort**, on the Essex side of the Thames, opposite Gravesend.
19. **Corunna**, on N.W. coast of Spain.
20. This took place on the 19th July 1588.
21. On the 23rd and 25th of July 1588.
22. **Sith**, *i.e.*, *since*.
23. **Dunkirk**, now in French Flanders, very near the frontier of Belgium.
24. **Gravelines**, in extreme N.E. of France, near Calais.
25. A harbour near the Giant's Causeway, in the north of Ireland, is still called *Port na Spagna* or Port of Spain.

THE ELIZABETHAN PERIOD.



SHAKESPEARE.

THE Literary Outburst.—The term 'Elizabethan Period'[1] is applied in histories of our literature to that which begins after the destruction of the Armada. The great writers of this time had grown up under Elizabeth, and some of them survived her death, leaving an 'afterglow' like the rich colours of an autumn sunset, to render beautiful the reign which followed.

No other period of our literature, except that of the present Victorian era, can compare with this either in variety of writers or in greatness of genius. Of the list of authors under these two queens, it is difficult to say which is the more splendid; the modern galaxy contains the larger number of illustrious names, the Elizabethan firmament is rendered brilliant by the greater number of stars of the first magnitude.

To give even the names of these immortal writers would be impossible here, and you must be content to learn a little of four of Elizabeth's great men.

First in time comes Spenser,[2] father of English pastoral poetry, and the author of the great allegorical poem of the "Fairy Queen." In this work, the 'Fairyland' is this fair realm of England; and its queen represents in one person both 'Glory' and the great Elizabeth, who is

sought after by Prince Arthur, the perfected knight and gentleman. He thus writes of the English sovereign:—

> "And thou, O fairest princess under sky,
> In this fair mirror may'st behold thy face,
> And thine own realms in Land of Faïry."

The works of Spenser contain in so exquisite a form the very essence of poetry, that he has become known to all his readers as the 'Poets' Poet.'

A great writer has finely said that the Elizabethan era gave birth to the three great ideas of modern times: that *Shakespeare*[3] revealed the modern social idea, *Bacon*[4] the modern scientific one, and *Hooker*[5] the modern political one. Let us try to learn what is meant by this.

Shakespeare is the greatest dramatist that the world has ever produced, and is recognised as the foremost man of the Anglo-Saxon race. Now, a drama is a mimic world made by the author; and by observing the laws according to which a dramatist governs his little world, we may find out his views of the greater world of the Creator. Now upon what *idea* has Shakespeare framed his worlds? In contrast to the spirit of feudal and chivalrous times, which separated the barons and the belted knight from the inferior beings below them, this great Seer declared the essential identity of *all*, the similarity of their passions and feelings, and their *equality* in the sight of justice and of God.

> "In the corrupted currents of this world,
> Offence's gilded hand may shove by justice;
> And oft 'tis seen the wicked prize itself
> Buys out the law: but 'tis not so above;
> There is no shuffling—there the action lies

In his true nature; and we ourselves compell'd,
Even to the teeth and forehead of our faults,
To give in evidence." [6]

The views of life which, in modern times, lead to the numberless agencies for the relief of the sick, the suffering, and the poor, are those which led *him* to write—

" The quality of mercy is not strained,
It droppeth as the gentle rain from heaven
Upon the place beneath: it is twice bless'd;
It blesseth him that gives and him that takes." [7]

In this, and in many other ways, Shakespeare disclosed the *modern social idea.*

Before the time of *Bacon*, those who called themselves philosophers submitted to the authority of a celebrated Greek writer called Aristotle,[8] and thought that truth was to be discovered merely by arguing or speculating about the causes of things. Bacon, in a great work called the 'Novum Organum,' the new *organ* or instrument, proclaimed that man's first duty, if he wished to know the truth about the world, was humbly to learn from the universe around, to *observe*, to begin with *facts*. He declared that if man desired to be the lord of nature, he must first be its obedient slave. This method of beginning with observed facts, and gradually arranging these facts in an orderly

BACON.

way until we discover the laws of nature, is called the *inductive* method. All modern science follows the Baconian plan, and that is what is meant by saying that Bacon *first* clearly thought out the modern *scientific idea.*

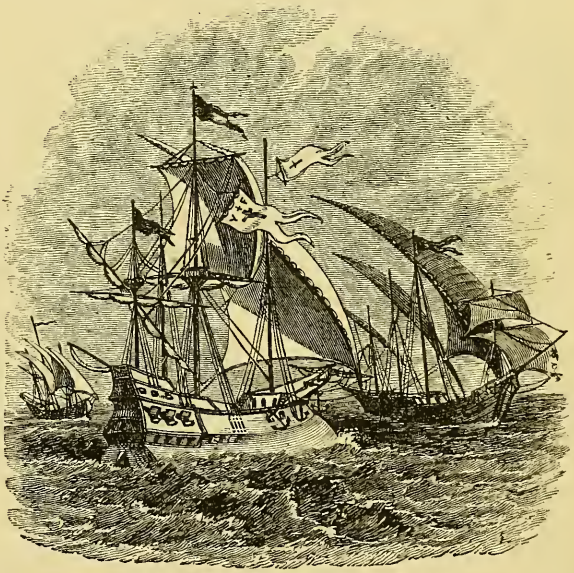
Hooker was the author of a great work called 'Ecclesiastical Polity.' In it, while dealing mainly with Church government, he, in melodious and eloquent language, propounds the theory that the rule of a monarch is founded upon a compact between the sovereign and the people—the sovereign promising, by his coronation oath, to keep the laws; the people, as expressed by the oath of allegiance, agreeing to be loyal to their king. Thus the ultimate source of authority is in the will of the whole people. It follows that if a ruler break and despise the laws, he may properly be removed from the throne; and it equally follows that individual members of a community should keep the laws laid down by the whole society. This is the theory upon which our present monarchy is established; and thus it was that Hooker enunciated the *modern political* idea.

These four men were the leaders of a host of great writers, so that you will now begin to understand how original and fresh was the genius of these Elizabethan thinkers, and how much of our modern life is founded upon their teachings.

The Naval Enterprise of this Period.—The Elizabethans, it has been said, went out upon great enterprises singing songs of surpassing beauty. You have been reading of the singers at home in England; and it would not be right for you to turn from this period without learning a little more about the hardy seamen who led the way in the career of discovery, naval supremacy,[9] and colonisation, which has rendered so

glorious the later pages of England's history. The mariners of those days set no limits to their daring. They had learned that the earth was a sphere; Columbus, the Cabots, and others had given the hint that there were rich lands upon this earth yet undiscovered; and the bold seamen determined to rest not until they had rounded-in this little world.

Perhaps the best way to give you a notion of how much these old investigators did, will be to place before you a brief account of one who wrote about them. Near the end of Elizabeth's reign, a very laborious geographer, called Hakluyt,[10] published three volumes under the following title: 'The Principal Navigations, Voyages, Traffiques, and Discoveries of the English Nation, made by Sea or over Land, to the Remote and Farthest Distant Quarters of the Earth.'



SHIPS OF THE ELIZABETHAN PERIOD.

The first volume tells of these subjects:—Voyages to the *north and north-east*, the true state of Iceland, the defeat of the Spanish Armada, and other kindred topics. The second gives a full account of travels to the south and south-east, that is, along the coast of Africa and

round the Cape of Good Hope. The third volume, the most interesting of all, describes expeditions to North America, the West Indies, and round the world.

The *thoroughness* with which these seamen did their work is admirably shown in a book written by John

QUEEN ELIZABETH KNIGHTING DRAKE ON HIS RETURN FROM HIS VOYAGE ROUND THE WORLD.

Davies, who himself made three voyages in search of a North-West route to China, and discovered the well-known straits, ever since called by his name.[11]

In this book[12] he tries to show "that the world in all his zones and places is habitable and inhabited, *the*

seas likewise universally navigable without any natural annoyance to hinder the same; whereby appears that from England there is a short and speedy passage into the South Seas to China, Malucca, Phillipina and India, by northerly navigation, to the renown, honour, and benefit of her Majesty's state and commonalty."

Truly Spenser but breathed the spirit of his age when he uttered these bold lines:—

"But let that man with better sense advise,
That of the world least part to us is read;
And daily how through hardy enterprise
Many great regions are discoverèd,
Which to late age were never mentionèd.
Who ever heard of the Indian Peru?
Or who in venturous vessel measurèd
The Amazon's huge river, now found true?
Or fruitfullest Virginia who did ever view?" [13]

The imagination of the age even reached beyond the bounds of this little earth, for Spenser hints that man will yet know of other worlds than this—

"What if within the moon's fair shining sphere,
What if in every other star unseen,
Of other worlds he happily should hear?"

Ere leaving this subject, you would perhaps like to read a little poem about our earliest colonists. It is written by a poet called Andrew Marvell, who was born at the close of the period, but it very beautifully discloses the noble feelings of those who at that time left this island to seek homes across the wide ocean. It is called 'The Emigrants in the Bermudas,' and the following are four of the verses:—

"Where the remote Bermudas ride
In the ocean's bosom unespied,

From a small boat that rowed along,
The listening winds received this song:

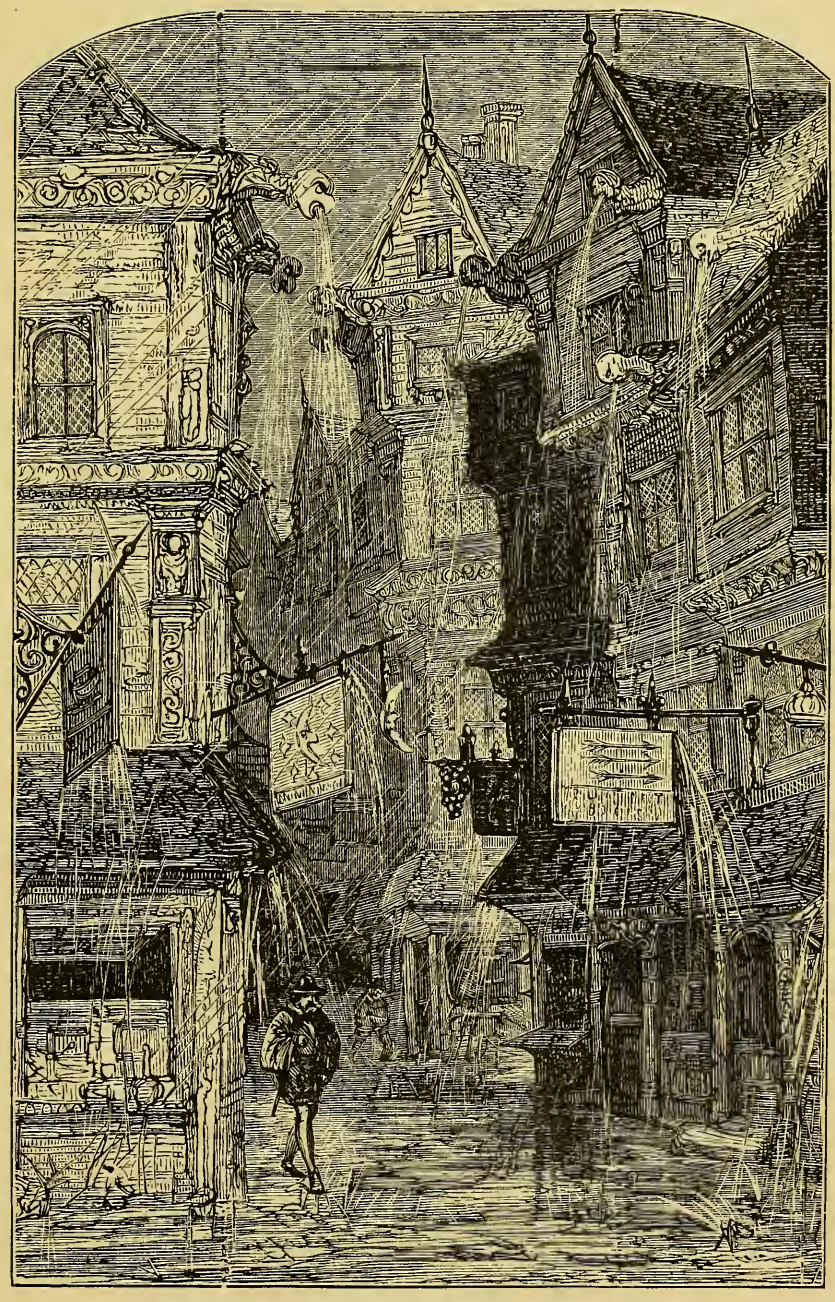
'What should we do but sing His praise
That led us through the watery maze
Unto an isle so long unknown,
And yet far kinder than our own?

'O let our voice His praise exalt,
Till it arrive at heaven's vault,
Which then perhaps rebounding may
Echo beyond the Mexique bay.'

Thus sang they in the English boat
A holy and a cheerful note,
And all the way, to guide their chime,
With falling oars they kept the time."

The Close of the Period.—The close of the reign of splendour and glory was one of gloom and sorrow. The great queen, now full of years, fell into a state of profound melancholy. She became gradually reduced in body; grew morose and suspicious; refused to lie upon a bed, remaining propped up on a stool, and spending her days and nights in tears; and finally, at three o'clock in the morning of March 4, 1603, she passed away in still unconsciousness.

1. The Elizabethan period may be said to extend from 1588 to 1625.
2. **Spenser**, born 1553, died 1599.
3. **Shakespeare**, born 1564, died 1616.
4. **Bacon**, born 1561, died 1626
5. **Hooker**, born 1553, died 1600.
6. From "Hamlet," act iii., scene 3.
7. From Portia's famous speech in the Trial Scene of "The Merchant of Venice.
8. **Aristotle** was born in 384 B.C. in Macedonia.
9. Britain is now the first naval power in the world.
10. **Hakluyt**, 1553-1616. Spenser, Hooker, and Hakluyt were born in the same year.
11. **Davis Straits**, between Greenland and Cumberland Island.
12. The book is called 'The World's Hydrographical Description,' which long name simply means 'The Description of the Seas and Oceans of the Earth.
13. From Spenser's 'Fairy Queen,' book ii., introductory stanzas.



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